



## DOCTORAL THESIS

### Performance/documentation disrupting ontologies

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**Performance ⇔ Documentation: Disrupting Ontologies**

by

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at live-streaming between 2006-2016, taking London's National Theatre as its focus. Looking at the use of technology, specifically live-streaming, the thesis considers the effect of live-streaming both *in* and *of* performance in relation to 'performance' and 'documentation'. I question the ontological nature of performance and documentation, conventionally considered to work in a causal, linear relationship, and identify a mutual, non-linear relationship between the two states enabled via live-streaming. I use the chemical term of 'sublimation' to express this relationship indicated by a double-headed arrow that speaks as a reimagined model to illustrate the oscillating, cyclical movement that I propose between performance and documentation. I further identify the theoretical area established between two states as a zone of 'unmarked liveness'. I evidence the zone using productions as case studies throughout the thesis; and focus equally on the work of director Katie Mitchell's use of streaming within performance, as well as the live-streaming project, NT Live, established by the National Theatre in 2009. The later chapters follow the work of Mitchell and NT Live to the Barbican Centre, demonstrating their significance as innovative outputs, and the influence of the National Theatre as a beacon venue. The increasing use of streaming within performances, as documented within this thesis, marks the 'unmarked' liveness: challenging and marking the enduring modernist models of theories that represent the relationship between 'performance' and 'documentation', despite postmodernist and poststructuralist thinking and practice demonstrated in the cases of live-streaming identified.

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## INTRODUCTION

### RETURN

The National Theatre has gone ‘live’. Since 2009 it has broadcast, live, many of its plays to audiences sitting in cinemas in the United Kingdom, and to other participating countries around the world. An inspiration for this thesis, presenter Emma Freud, standing onstage at the Olivier Theatre, introduced the screening of *She Stoops to Conquer* (2012) for those sitting in their local cinema. She spoke on the concept of ‘NT Live’ to its viewers, before halting and rethinking; ‘it’s live, or *almost* live’.<sup>1</sup> As live showings are customarily viewed as co-temporal and co-spatial, the delayed Australian showings for example, are more easily identified as documented versions of the performance rather than live, akin to the videos held in the NT Archive collection<sup>2</sup>. I would propose that the extended concept of the live, developed from this case, demonstrates a crucial *between* regarding ‘document’ and live ‘performance’, between (NT) Live and Archive.

Freud’s qualifying of the apparently simple notion of the ‘live’ demonstrates its complexity in this context. Given the time delay, it would be logical to term the Australian showings as documents, as an article that follows an event. Scholar Jon Erickson writes that ‘documentation is really only a supplement to performance’ (Erickson, 1999); and I relate Erickson’s theory to the cause and effect linear relationship as suggested by David Hume<sup>3</sup>. That the

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<sup>1</sup> *She Stoops To Conquer*, By Goldsmith, O., (Dir.) Lloyd, J., (Perf.) National Theatre, London: Olivier, date of performance: 28/2/2012.

<sup>2</sup> Australia see their ‘live’ screening a minimum of two weeks after the broadcasts in the United Kingdom, due to technical issues which make simultaneous screening too problematic. Private interview, D. Sabel, 15/2/2012.

<sup>3</sup> Hume considers what he terms as a ‘connexion’ of ideas, a cause and effect relationship, and writes that ‘our imagination runs easily from one idea to another .. as they lie *contagious* to each other ... [original emphasis] (Hume, 1978: 11). Performances explore and enable the imagination to connect with elements around conjoined themes. Hume’s consideration of the contiguous



Australian showings are nevertheless termed as ‘live’ troubles both the theoretical nature of live, instantaneous performance, and the nature of documentation. I will argue that documentation does not necessarily occur only once a performance has ceased, following Philip Auslander in arguing ‘against intrinsic opposition... and challenge the traditional assumption that the live precedes the mediatized’ (Auslander, 2008: 11). Many contemporary performances, including work presented at the National Theatre such as the media works of Katie Mitchell, consist of or include elements that might previously be considered ‘documents’, such as photographs or video recordings.<sup>4</sup> This forces a theoretical meeting of performance and documentation, and demands a reviewing of their status when set against each other: a video of a piece of work may stand in and become the *performance*, though in reality, the videotaped version was a recorded document of a live, initial event, chronologically speaking. Under these conditions, ‘documentation’ could arguably precede ‘performance’ and this thesis will consist of a post-structuralist analysis of the terms and their relationship. I will demonstrate how media can work, such as in the case of NT Live, to disrupt the ‘ontology’ of performance, confuse the apparent binary of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’, and create the need for a new term for a new phenomenon.

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allows a connection to be made between the causal relationship of performance and documentation. That performance occurs within one space and time, which elapses before an audiences’ eyes, the memory of the event becomes the effect of the performance. Thus it can be argued that the relationship between performance and documentation is causal and therefore linear, as presented by Hume.

<sup>4</sup> As Rebecca Schneider notes, ‘It is fascinating that photography, not generally considered a medium of liveness, has become a vertiable hotbed for re-staging, re-playing, reenacting for the camera in work that mixes theatricality and documentality in tantalizing ways (Schneider, 2011: 29). I argue that Mitchell’s media works in similar ways to the mentioned features of photography, where Mitchell’s use of video, for example, encourages a separation between live display and digital display, which feels separate and a document of the live, whilst being part of the live process; thereby creating a merging between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’.

## National Theatre: Live

For the purpose of this thesis, I focus attention on the National Theatre, London in the decade between 2006-2016: from its plays and directors such as Mitchell, whose first media production *Waves* was shown in 2006 and worked as the other inspiration for this thesis<sup>5</sup>; to the NT Archives that contain the ‘documents’ of all its performances, to the broadcasts of NT Live beginning in 2009. The NT Live ‘seasons’ were initially formed to improve access for theatregoers<sup>6</sup>. Promoted as a cultural beacon of theatre and performance<sup>7</sup>, NT Live has offered an intimate view of the National’s work, opening a new channel for theatre appreciation across borders and continents. NT Live, proposed and driven by David Sabel, an American business student with prior theatre training, was inspired by the Metropolitan Opera’s Live showings, which had 935,000 viewing its first season, generating \$13.3 million from North American sales and \$5 million from overseas (Barker, 2013: 3). NT Live’s evolution is timely. Many institutions are now streaming events to discrete audiences; the Royal Opera House began screening in 2010 along with Sydney Opera House, and the English National Opera joined the digital race in early 2011. Subsequently other venues and institutions have begun streaming, such as the Royal Shakespeare Company from Stratford-Upon-Avon, some of these via the internet also, such as the National Theatre Wales, the O2 arena and the University of Bristol, via their connection

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<sup>5</sup> Whilst this thesis considers the media work of Mitchell, I acknowledge that her previous training and work consists of a more classical repertoire. Prior to *Waves*, Mitchell had directed *A Dream Play* (2005), based upon August Stringberg’s original, as well as Anton Chekov’s *Three Sisters* (2003). The Agency, 2017, (accessed: 04/09/17).

<sup>6</sup> Broadcasting enabled many viewers, in discrete locations, to view National Theatre work, rather than privileging those few who could access the theatre to view in London. Private interview, D. Sabel, 15/2/2012.

<sup>7</sup> National Theatre, 2012, (accessed 16/4/2013).

with the contemporary arts centre, Arnolfini. Despite these cases, this thesis focuses on NT Live specifically, as the first British institution to initiate such a wide reaching and successful broadcasting development.

Whilst NT Live employs technology to record and broadcast performances, productions such as Mitchell's *Waves* incorporated technology within the work, via the use of live video feeds relayed onto projection screens. Mitchell's media work is relevant to this discussion given that the recording technologies employed enable reproduction, and thus I argue 'documentation' within performance, viable. Mitchell's media performances and NT Live's broadcasts being termed as '*live*' in both name and genre, despite their doubled potential as recordings (typically a trait associated with archival footage and documentary resources), renders them ultimately sustainable and thus creates terminological and theoretical confusion due to prior categorization: the collision of the 'live' with the notion of sustainability, which exists because of the ease of initial collection and recollection<sup>8</sup>. It is this concern within the theoretical discourse of multimedia work that I aim to unpack throughout the thesis. Moreover, considering the twinned relationship between performance and documentation, Mitchell's case is again relevant to the thesis, as an adaptation of a pre-existing text. The notes and bibles created during the adaptation and rehearsal process form a set of working documents, blurring the idea of a linear relationship between performance and documentation, as the 'documentation' can be seen to precede the 'performance', a notion this thesis aims to prove in

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<sup>8</sup> I am not referring here to ecological issues, rather considering the longevity offered to work via documentation. Considering recording devices, Paul Otlet writes on his list of functions of the documentary machine: 'Automatic retrieval of documents for consultation and presented either direct to the enquirer or via a machine ...' University of Illinois, 2014, (accessed: 25/11/14), which ultimately advocates a technological archive for depositors and inquirers alike, thus enabling sustainability through documentation.

order to move beyond the modernist interpretation of the relationship between the states that I argue exists despite developments in postmodernism and post-structuralism; and consider further with regard to the addition of technology and media within performance and archiving. In the ‘afterlife’ of the performance, the notes made during the rehearsal process along with the detritus of the performance are held within the NT Archives, thereby extending the ‘life’ of the performance via documentation. Furthermore National Theatre at 50, which celebrated fifty years of the National Theatre in 2013, involved a reworking of many significant reproductions, Encore screenings of NT Live performances<sup>9</sup>, as well as a television broadcast, which included actors recalling memories and performances of the past. Packaged after the event as a DVD, each broadcast creates a further reworking of the documents and detritus of performances, and thus disrupts once more the mentioned linear relationship, which arguably exists between the two states of performance and documentation.

### *Live To Your Local Cinema*

The NT Live screenings are formulaic in approach. Once the directors of the National Theatre and NT Live have approved a production, two camera rehearsals take place. The first establishes the angles and shots as a sort of rough guide to the filming. After a period of revision with both camera crew and NT Live, a second camera rehearsal perfects and revises ahead of the live screening. Those audience members in the theatre interact with both the performance and the cameras. There are slight variations for each production although five

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<sup>9</sup> The Encore performances may exhibit what Auslander terms as a ‘digital liveness’ (Auslander, 2012: 7) where the performance is neither co-temporal or co-spatial with a ‘live’ version but nevertheless performs a sense of liveness. Furthermore, Matthew Causey terms such performances ‘new originals’ (Causey, 2006: 40), identifying feelings of newness within digital replays.

cameras are usually placed in a semi circle around the stage. As the performance progresses the cameras move along dolly tracks to set and shoot their shot, working in anticipation of the next section of filming. As each camera is recording 'live', a red light flicks on beside the monitor of the camera. These shots in turn present the cinema audience with their NT Live experience, which displays all the conventions of watching a film, with the exception of the interval and introductory episode.

Martin Barker has written about live theatre broadcasts, including NT Live, in *Live to Your Local Cinema: The Remarkable Rise of Livecasting* (2013). His research interweaves audience responses from two different sources: Picturehouse, in streaming not only NT Live and Met Live broadcasts but others also, including the Royal Opera House broadcasts; and feedback from a NESTA sponsored project<sup>10</sup>, which was collected from audiences during NT Live's pilot screening of *Phèdre* (2009). Barker gleaned some useful results from this study. For example, when comparing the engagement of the theatre audience and the cinema audience at the NT Live performance of *Phèdre*, cinema audiences were recorded as being more engaged than theatre audiences, arguably because of the novelty factor<sup>11</sup>. Cinema audiences were approached about the 'liveness' debate (Barker, 2013: 56) via questions concerning the immediacy of the showing, the intimacy, the 'buzz', their learning and the idea of being (in) the audience (Barker, 2013: 65). As their engagement was seemingly not altered, despite their

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<sup>10</sup> Founded in 1998 by Lottery money, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) became the leading, non-governmental, promoter of innovation and technologization. In July 1998 'Take 12 – Digital Innovation in Film' was launched, exploring the opportunities for small businesses capitalising on the digital technology industry. It was from a keenness to support a model for livecasting that NT Live's *Phèdre* received such interest and audience research (Barker, 2013: 24).

<sup>11</sup> Viewing the theatre in a cinema setting was a new experience, thus more exciting and engaging. Barker notes that the engagement of cinema audiences as compared with theatre audiences at NT Live events may alter in the long term (Barker, 2013: 29).

distance from the National Theatre, the issue of liveness was thus deemed inconsequential to the interviewed audience members (Barker, 2013: 30)<sup>12</sup>. Barker notes that there were two sorts of viewers at the broadcasts, which he terms as ‘experts’ or ‘immersives’. The type of viewer, according to Barker, depends on their type of viewing habit. The expert was less absorbed, because of a need for a critical (and physical) distance from the action, as found within the theatre. Due to the close physical distance between the cinema audience and the cinema screen, and the intimate shots from the best seat in the house throughout the broadcast, this type of viewer remained intentionally detached from the action, in an effort to create some separation between thought and feeling. The ‘immersives’ however found the closeness and intimacy of the shots an advantage within the cinema, allowing them to fully absorb and engage in the action (Barker, 2013: 66). Despite the differing of viewpoints, Barker reports that the shots themselves felt generally unedited (though this is the limited opinion of Barker and his colleagues) and furthermore that the audience at large were very satisfied with the quality of the streaming, giving excellent ratings in this regard (Barker, 2013: 30). As to whether or not this rating or indeed the committed engagement of the cinema viewers to the screenings has been maintained throughout the NT Live ‘seasons’ remains largely uninvestigated. This thesis will contribute to the discussion about the ‘liveness’ of NT Live, consider the engagement of not only audiences but also actors in the filming process, and

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<sup>12</sup> Inserting the notion of the ‘live’ into NT Live is theoretically significant given the geographical and temporal distance between stage and screen. (Barker, 2013: 41) Barker acknowledged that ‘Even a one day delay reduced interest in attending [the live broadcasts] by half. *Some* sense of knowing that it is going on now, as yet incomplete and indeterminate, matters greatly to very many people’ [original emphasis] (Barker, 2013: 40).

consider the development of NT Live through its discrete filming and Encore screenings<sup>13</sup>.

### *The Director's Craft*

Currently Mitchell's only published work on directing is *The Director's Craft*, published in 2009. This book provides a summary of the duties of a director and is written as a textbook for directors or students in the early stages of their careers. Mitchell acknowledges that her text and approach to directing is influenced primarily by the work of Constantin Stanislavski (Mitchell, 2009: 2). Her interest in Russian directors has in turn influenced her approach towards and selection of plays produced; *The Director's Craft* focuses primarily on her production of *The Seagull*, shown at the National Theatre in 2006, written by Anton Chekhov. As the foreword to the text suggests, the then director of the National Theatre, Nicholas Hytner, has not always agreed with Mitchell regarding artistic decisions (Mitchell, 2009: xi) and Mitchell's move from classically produced plays to her production of *Waves* involved persuading Hytner<sup>14</sup>; most likely as Mitchell's use of video and live streaming arguably eschewed her training. Despite Mitchell's self-proclaimed naivety in dealing with and directing media work (Mitchell, 2009: 91), as well as Hytner's reservations, the techniques used to construct *Waves* developed into another media production, ...*Some trace of her*, shown at the National Theatre in 2008. Whilst both of these productions required media and video to shape the narrative, in that the use of video was showcased to an audience with the result streamed simultaneously, only *Waves* is mentioned, briefly, in the two pages on the use of

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<sup>13</sup> For example: *The Habit of Art* (2013) and *Hamlet* (2017), to be discussed. (Dates listed refer to time of Encore, rather than NT Live performances).

<sup>14</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

video within Mitchell's directing textbook. This thesis looks at unexpected use of media within Mitchell's productions, which have subsequently developed at other venues within the country and in Europe, as well as the considering the altered role of the National Theatre in promoting productions with an advanced use of technology. Whilst Mitchell notes within *The Director's Craft* that other companies such as the Wooster Group have used media within their work for many years (Mitchell, 2009: 90), I argue that such an approach within mainstream theatre in London developed due to her evolving view of directing. That Mitchell's textbook, albeit written in the early phases of her media movement and yet to be updated, focuses primarily on her classical work such as *The Seagull*, I consider it to demonstrate Mitchell's characteristics as a director, marking her movement towards media work as anomalous. I want to argue that Mitchell, and the National Theatre, have somewhat unknowingly and unintentionally created a new form of performance. The thesis will highlight not only Mitchell's media productions at the National Theatre, but will also consider the development of her work as a director beyond the years discussed in *The Director's Craft*.

#### Performance↔Documentation

The National Theatre's NT Live project and media productions by director Mitchell provide a useful means of exploring the way that the relationship between performance and documentation has been theorized in academic discourse. Both NT Live's and Mitchell's use of live streaming, in and of performance, could be understood to disrupt established ways of theoretically imagining the performances on display, as they vacillate between traditional



models of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’. Performances, theatrical or performance art, are arguably unique in their presentation given their co-temporal and co-spatial quality. They are thus seen as ephemeral, as has been suggested by Peggy Phelan. As a result, the ‘ontology’ or essence of performance is a thing of flux, movement and disappearance. (Phelan, 1993: 146). In contradiction to this, documentation aims to retain a display, identity or details, in order that the performance may be readdressed in the future, creating sustainability<sup>15</sup>. The programme of a performance is a good example of documentation. Documentary aids, such as videos, when used as a mode of display either in or of performances, force a theoretical meeting between ‘documentation’ and ‘performance’: thus the unique element of performance, and its ‘ontology’, is put into question by such media whose function is to supposedly re-mediate. As such, even a live feed, which has the potential to record and thus document a performance, can be interpreted as a metaphorical challenge to the nature of performance. The decision to project the National Theatre’s *oeuvre* through media relay and projection enables a subsequent alternative viewing of the theory of performance and documentation. I argue that the relationship between performance and documentation is not sequential but rather cyclical or eventually simultaneous<sup>16</sup>. I have thus chosen to deliberately notate the blurring of these two states as ‘performance↔documentation’, remodeling the conventional causal linear relationship in order to make visible

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<sup>15</sup> (From a detailed list of the imperative functions of archiving machines by Paul Otlet): ‘We must bring together a collection of machines ... which can perform ... the creation of documents in such a way that each item of information has its own identity and, in its relationships with those items comprising any collection, can be retrieved as necessary’ University of Illinois, 2014, (accessed: 25/11/14). It is the recollection of documents, enabled by technology, which permits their sustainability.

<sup>16</sup> Heidegger notes, ‘It seems as though causality is shrinking into ... either simultaneously or in sequence’ (Heidegger, 2011: 229).

my hypothesis that all performance (regardless of its method of relay) holds, what I am calling, an ‘unmarked liveness’<sup>17</sup>. The zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ represents the central meeting point between the traditional binary opposition of the ‘live’ and ‘pre-recorded’, noted by Auslander with his claims for ‘the event preceding and authorizing its documentation’ (Auslander, 2006: 1)<sup>18</sup>. My proposal of an ‘unmarked liveness’ will point to a theoretical shift away from a determination of the two states as mutually exclusive and separate. My conjoining of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ in this way represents my insistence upon the two-way flow of influence<sup>19</sup>. I describe my re-imagined relationship as one of sublimation, in an attempt to realign, or rather, *regard* the *line* of influence supposed between the two states.

### *Sublimation*

Sublimation, in conventional English usage, is a process by which an impulse becomes more neatly accepted; it is also a process through which chemicals are transferred from one state to another, passing through seamlessly. The

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<sup>17</sup> The term chosen credits the two significant works of Phelan (*Unmarked: the politics of performance*) and Auslander (*Liveness: performance in a mediatized culture*) whose thinking influenced the path of the thesis. Interestingly the debate continued beyond these two texts: Phelan in *Performance, Live Culture and Things of the Heart* responds to Auslander’s critique of her text, ten years after the publication of *Unmarked* (Phelan, 2003: 295). I am also not alone in considering the discussion between these two scholars: Matthew Causey cites the works as shaping his writing on the ontology of performance with regards to technology (Causey, 2006: 16). To my understanding, however, I am unique in using the titles of the works to create a synthesis between the arguments that provides an alternative path and interpretation of the discussion.

<sup>18</sup> Auslander considers the relationship between performance and documentation in detail. ‘The documentary category represents the traditional way in which the relationship between performance art and its documentation is conceived. It is assumed that the documentation of the performance event provides both a record of it through which it can be reconstructed ... and evidence that it actually occurred. The connection between performance and document is thus thought to be ontological, with the event preceding and authorizing its documentation’ (Auslander 2006: 1). I argue that the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ represents the merging of these two states, thus disrupting the traditional ontological model of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’.

<sup>19</sup> In contestation with Phelan’s argument (Phelan, 1993: 146).

transference from one state to another, and back again, is indicated scientifically by the use of arrowheads<sup>20</sup>, typically, pointing in two opposing directions indicating a reversible reaction. It is by extension of this principle that I propose the link between the two states, apparently opposing, of performance and documentation<sup>21</sup>. I consider that their connection is twinned and reversible, in contrast to Phelan's definition of the 'ontology' of performance. (I acknowledge that Phelan's discussion on the 'ontology' of performance was written with regards to the politics of performance and the unmarked presence of females. I use this term tentatively; my discussion is not concerned with feminism as was Phelan's deliberation, but rather to extend the issue concerning an 'ontology' of performance)<sup>22</sup>. The in-between state, which is passed through, I refer to as an area of 'unmarked liveness'. As with the liquid state, which is passed through in sublimation, this in-between zone is barely apparent, though present, working as both 'performance' and 'documentation' or rather 'performance $\leftrightarrow$ documentation'. I further extend the analogy to suggest that the

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<sup>20</sup> 'A reversible reaction is defined as a 'chemical reaction that proceeds in both directions at the same time, as the product decomposes back into reactants as it is being produced. Such reactions do not run to completion, provided that no substance leaves the system. Examples include the manufacture of ammonia from hydrogen and nitrogen, and the oxidation of sulphur dioxide to sulphur trioxide.  $N_2 + 3H_2 \leftrightarrow 2NH_3$   $2SO_2 + O_2 \leftrightarrow 2SO_3$ '. Proquest reader, 2006, (accessed: 12/01/15).

<sup>21</sup> Richard Schechner displayed two polarized entities through a visual description in his 2003 *Performance Theory*. He states that 'Efficacy and entertainment are not so much opposed to each other; rather they form the poles of a continuum ... The basic polarity is between efficacy and entertainment, not between ritual and theater' (Schechner, 2003: 130). In his diagram of the *efficacy-entertainment braid*, Schechner traces a history of theatre and performance in relation to the two states. My own use of a visual aid to describe the hypothetical state between performance and documentation likewise considers the supposedly polar entities; although my model is based upon a simultaneous back and forth rather than an elongated path through history.

<sup>22</sup> The notion of ontology is complicated itself, but especially so when considering in regard to performance. Dale Jacquette, writing on the concept of ontology, considers that there are several branches of ontological thought, which differ because of their context as pure philosophical debate or applied scientific insight, and also through their application as discipline or domain (Jacquette, 2002: 3) I suggest that Phelan has approached her considerations on the ontology of performance through a scientific but theoretical model, allowing her to critique practical works from an academic viewpoint. Jacquette writes that this branch of insight is 'a description or inventory of the things that area supposed to exist according to a particular theory, which might but need not be true' (Jacquette, 2002: 3). It is the nature of performance, and the possibility of its changing nature with regards to documentation, that I aim to investigate.

linking between the two states of performance and documentation in this way is psychologically a finer concept (as per the dictionary definition)<sup>23</sup> than considering the two as polar. My use of a double-headed arrow works as an appropriated symbol of sublimation, used to demonstrate the bond between these two states and offering a symbol of a cyclical, rather than linear, relationship<sup>24</sup>.

My concern with altering the linear relationship assumed between performance and documentation is based on a post-structuralist thinking, which this thesis will reflect. Michel Foucault, in his post-structuralist writings, noted that ‘series, which are juxtaposed to one another, follow one another, overlap and intersect, without one being able to reduce them to a linear schema’ (Foucault, 1972: 8); furthermore stating that ‘the problem is no longer one ... of tracing a line, but one of division, of limits; it is no longer one of lasting foundations, but one of transformations that serve as new foundations, the rebuilding of foundations’ (Foucault, 1972: 5). This thesis attempts to mark the unmarked zone of liveness between performance and documentation; but acknowledges that in creating a unity between these two terms, whilst literally unaltered by the use of technology, the theoretical implications and terming of performance change. Whilst the thesis uses the terms performance and documentation in order to clarify to readers the overall argument, because of the challenges posed through naming and terming highlighted, the overall labelling of the term *performance* becomes confused. The use of the double-headed arrow, marking the area of

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<sup>23</sup> ‘sublimate<sup>1</sup> v 1 in psychology, to divert the expression of (an instinctual desire or impulse) from a primitive form to a socially or culturally acceptable one. 2 = SUBLIME<sup>2</sup>. 3 to make higher or of higher worth. >> sublimation *n*.

sublime<sup>2</sup> v in chemistry, to pass directly from the solid to the vapour state, without passing through the liquid state, and usu to pass directly back to the solid state’ (Allen, 2002: 890).

<sup>24</sup> I am aware that performance and documentation are material objects, rather than transitory ‘states’; however, I refer to them as such in order to extend my metaphor with sublimation, and in an attempt to reconceptualize performance and documentation as moving and unmarked instead of grounded and established.

‘unmarked liveness’ that develops throughout the thesis is a solution to the confusion of terms cited, that speaks to the hybrid, disrupted ontological nature of performance<sup>25</sup>. In a lengthy passage specifically describing the history of documents, Foucault notes that:

history has altered its position in relation to the document: it has taken as its primary task, not the interpretation of the document, not the attempt to decide whether it is telling the truth or what is its expressive value, but to work on it from within and to develop it: history now organizes the document, divides it up, distributes it, orders it, arranges it in levels, establishes series, distinguishes between what is relevant and what is not, discovers elements, defines unities, describes relations (Foucault, 1972: 6).

Foucault’s concerns with the history of documentation inspired the use of chronology within the thesis. By returning to 2006 and tracing the path of development and use of the National Theatre’s live streaming both in and of performance, I attempt to break with the linear structure presented, in order to better reflect the cyclical, post-structural framework. The headings: *Reconstruct*, *Redevelop* and *Regenerate* show the progression of media display at the National Theatre and relate to Mitchell and NT Live’s use and development of live

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<sup>25</sup> ‘The old questions of the traditional analysis (What link should be made between disparate events? How can a causal succession be established between them? What continuity or overall significance do they possess? ... are now being replaced by questions of another type: which strata should be isolated from others? What types of series should be established? ... What system of relations (hierarchy, dominance, stratification, univocal determination, circular causality) may be established between them? ... And in what large-scale chronological table may distinct series of events be determined?’ (Foucault, 1972: 3). I will continue questioning these concerns throughout the thesis.

streaming work. Each heading contains a chapter on both Mitchell's work and NT Live: *Reconstruct* is formed of *Reform* and *Rewrite*; *Redevelop* is formed of *Repeat* and *Reborn* and *Regenerate* is formed of *Relive* and *Revive*. However, whilst the thesis is presented chronologically, it could be read as two discrete studies: the reconstruction, redevelopment and regeneration of Mitchell's media work following the same trajectory as the development of the NT Live project. As such the two sides of media development and display at the National Theatre in the decade that falls between the years of 2006 – 2016 are shown in their successive and well as interrelated paths of development as identified through the case studies described. Presenting the writing in this way aids my re-configuration of the metaphorical relationship envisaged between performance and documentation, reflecting their proposed cyclical state<sup>26</sup>. The case of live streaming at the National Theatre, and beyond, and my interrogation of 'performance ⇔ documentation' with regards to multimedia display alters not only the relationship between the two states but importantly the functions and considerations of *performance* with regards to theory and practice in contemporary culture.

## Establishing Terms

The need to document performance was borne from a variety of exigencies: to conform to a capitalist drive to sell performances where consumers stipulate that their performance match the marketing (Auslander, 2008: 54); to satisfy the legal

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<sup>26</sup> Indeed, my terming of the chapters and sections with the prefix, 're', speaks to the oscillations associated with its definitions; at once 'again or anew', whilst also 'back or backwards' (Allen, 2002: 734). My pursuit of a more appropriate model to frame the relationship between performance and documentation is also summarized in an alternative definition of the prefix: 'again in a new, altered, or improved way ...' (Allen, 2002: 734).

issues of ‘owning’ a performance and to tackle the conundrums of intellectual property rights and satisfy the demands of arts funders (Auslander, 2008: 147). Lastly, and crucially as theorist Amelia Jones notes, is the importance of documentation in acting as proof that an ephemeral event existed; demonstrated by her knowledge of performance pieces based upon their documentation (Jones, 1997: 11).

I will place significance on documentation in relation to existence, as the preconceived notion of documentation: to preserve something that would otherwise fade from public consciousness. Considering the ephemerality of performance (Schneider, 2011; Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012), as performance practitioners have worked with increasingly obscure forms and ideas during the last fifty years (such as leaving ice to melt in the street, as in Allan Kaprow’s *Fluids*, 1967), the imperative for documentation becomes heightened, arguably becoming more crucial to performance than merely providing a supplementary role. In some cases, documentation has gradually become part of the performance itself with performances incorporating spaces on stage for documentation to occur, in the work of the European body artist Gina Pane for example, such is their now intertwining nature (Auslander, 2008: 31). This chapter will consider the states of performance and documentation, both individually and when juxtaposed. Auslander concludes that events are:

staged to be documented at least as much as to be seen by an audience ...  
no documented work of performance art is performed solely as an end in  
itself: the performance is always at one level raw material for  
documentation, the final product through which it will be circulated and

with which it will inevitably become identified (Auslander, 2008: 31).

Writing in the 1970s, an era associated with the evolution of performance documentation, Michael Kirby notes that, ‘The need for performance documentation lies in the nature of theatre itself. Unlike the other arts, performance is perishable’ (Kirby, 1974: Preface). Kirby continues to say that ‘documentation obviously is crucial in providing a basis for understanding this ephemeral art’ (Kirby, 1974: Preface), yet responses to these claims raised questions for theorists such as Richard Schechner, who protested at the ephemeral nature of performance being undermined by documentary practices. Writing in response to Kirby, Schechner demonstrates his anxiety at the nature of documentation, reporting that it ‘will not approach the living heart of a performance: the *relationship* between the event and its audience, including the critic. Kirby hopes that documentation will somehow preserve the event, project it into the future. But theatre is evanescent ... ’ [original emphasis] (Schechner, 1974: 118). The viewpoint of performance as perishable, proposed by Schechner in his labeling of theatre and performance as ‘evanescent’ (Schechner, 1974: 118), contradicts Kirby’s proposal, which advocates the use of documentation to enable further understanding of art, via retention. Whilst Schechner defends the ‘living heart’ (Schechner, 1974: 118) of performance, the shared and unique relationship between the audience and the performer, Kirby defends the longevity of performance, provided by documentation, necessitated *because* of its ephemerality. The opposing viewpoints of Kirby and Schechner summarize the supposedly problematic relationship formed from the union of performance and documentation.



Gabriella Giannachi, Nick Kaye and Michael Shanks discuss the relationship between performance and documentation as comparable to tracing the relationship between presence and absence:

... speculations over a presence once performed (theatrically or socially), are confronted with questions over how we create relationships with that which remains. In this process performance theory and archeological thinking may productively converge in engagements with uncertainty, in documentation, and in the analyses of signs, remains and traces of dynamic processual phenomena that once occurred in the consequences of an act ... (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 1).

Giannachi et al consider, further to Kirby's claims, documentation as necessary but an inevitably hard process to oversee, given the lapse between the live performance and the 'archeological thinking' (Giannachi et al, 2012: 1) involved with documenting a performance passed. For example the live-streamed recording of NT Live events, I argue, creates situations in which documentation and the archiving of events might occur in parallel with live performance. Innovations such as live streaming bring about a shift in the relationship between performance and documentation, which is traditionally conceived as causal, as the live relay can be fixed as a 'document' during the live recording, as is the case in many of Mitchell's media productions. The use of the term 'live broadcast' used to describe the advantage of the NT Live screenings in providing the 'best seat in the house'<sup>27</sup> with broadcasts 'live to your local cinema' (Barker,

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<sup>27</sup> National Theatre, 2013, (accessed: 19/08/13).

2013) is oxymoronic however, when considering the broadcasting delay experienced by Australian cinemagoers discussed. The tautological claim of this performance, to broadcast 'live', is undermined by the nature of the subsequent event as documentary given the delay in reception of liveness. I want to argue that the contradictions borne from live streaming undermine the stability of the terms 'performance' and 'documentation', in both theory and practice.

### *Disrupting Ontology*

Jon McKenzie writes that the discourse of performance now encroaches into the worlds of business, culture and technology. As performance is gradually absorbed into each of these, so 'it has been radically reinscribed, reinstalled and redeployed in uncanny and powerful ways ... what has occurred has been the articulation and rapid extension of performance concepts into formalized systems of discourses and practices' (McKenzie, 2001: 13). The nature of performance is constantly altering; virtual theatres, theatre concerned with technology as a message carrying medium that use media to educate businesses as well as alter cultural cinema habits, are examples of such developments.<sup>28</sup> McKenzie calls such a shift of being over time 'onto-historical', suggesting a decentred approach to theory and practice, as he considers that the archives of one generation may be the inspirational found texts and stimulus for new works in the next (McKenzie, 2001: 18). McKenzie concludes:

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<sup>28</sup> See Gabriella Giannachi's *Virtual Theatres: An Introduction* (2004). See also the *iCinema* website for examples of immersive, virtual theatre. iCinema, 2013, (accessed: 16/04/13).

We can understand this development better when we realize that the mechanisms of performative power are nomadic and flexible more than sedentary and rigid, that its spaces are networked and digital more than enclosed and physical, that its temporalities are polyrhythmic and non-linear and not simply sequential and linear (McKenzie, 2001: 19).

I argue that the incorporation of technology into performance practice over the last twenty years has enabled a new phase of performance, one which potentially enables a merging of documents - paper, image or video - previously hidden in archives, to be circulated and rejuvenated via further practice, working as found materials in effect, thus further developing the field. I also consider that documents, such as videos of performances, are in themselves performative, found material for subsequent performances, such is the potential for Mitchell's generated media. Mitchell's *Waves*, as mentioned, as well as ...*Some Trace of Her* (2008) and the *Forbidden Zone* (2016) analyzed within the thesis, utilize cameras to create a filmed version of scenes that are projected simultaneously with the live bodies onstage. The use of the live feed creates a re-cycling effect between performance and documentation, performance and archive, borne from technological developments<sup>29</sup>.

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<sup>29</sup> Also *Five Truths* (2012), directed by Mitchell, which presented a videoed version of Shakespeare's Ophelia in the style of five significant directors: Antonin Artaud, Constantin Stanislavski, Peter Brook, Bertolt Brecht and Jerzy Grotowski. With ten screens covering the walls of an enclosed space, two screens for each director, the various depictions of Ophelia surrounded and attacked the audience with their madness. Whilst each film was pre-recorded, their simultaneous playing creates confusion for an audience through the various representations of Ophelia, working as performing documents of Shakespeare's text and as a performing archive of the various directors.

In interview, Mitchell has said that she considers her actors as ‘Foleys’<sup>30</sup> rather than actors in that their role is not only to convey the character to an audience, but also to establish via setting, shooting and filming, certain aspects of text into film to be projected above the stage, working simultaneously with the live bodies below. The objects that Mitchell uses to create her effects are ordinary; a tray of gravel and a pair of wellingtons combines to provide the effect of a walk over a driveway, in contrast with the advanced technology used in terms of theatre lighting and video projections. Similarly, Aleksandra Wolska writes about the production *machines machines machines machines machines machines machines* (2002) which used ‘machines’ to complete simple tasks, such as tear drops filling sponges to capacity so that the weight pulls a string to lift a cage to release a woodpecker, though admits that the original performance was not seen by her, rather a re-mediated, reworked event; the equivalent of seeing a summary of the first act of *Waves* perhaps. Yet in the subsequent re-enactment of the performance, Wolska says ‘It became clear that I was involved, not in the exercise of remembering a bygone event, but in a form of its continuation’ (Wolska, 2005: 84). Considering that the event had not ceased after the initial showing but that the performance continued via this reworked performance event, Wolska further reflects on the task-based, machine-driven performance, saying ‘When I returned to my own home, encounters with the show continued. In order to find the car keys, I looked for them in the refrigerator’ (Wolska, 2005: 84), allowing Wolska to identify with the work beyond the frames of the performance, or arguably its ‘documentation’ as an extended version of the

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<sup>30</sup> Foley allows for sounds to be theatricalised onstage to aid with the interpretation of the performances. National Theatre, 2014, (accessed: 24/10/2014).

original performance; demonstrating a (re)cycling relationship between performance and documentation.

The use of technology in Mitchell's performances in particular ranges from the use of lamps onstage, to the combination of the live feeds and projectors<sup>31</sup>. Indeed, accepting that technological aids are arguably quills, costumes and lamplight used throughout the history of theatre to enhance performance, these forms of aid can be largely summarized as augmenting 'natural powers' (Carroll, 1997: 187). Whilst the lamps used to light the filmed sections of Mitchell's various works do not extend the life of the performance alone as I am claiming of technology, specifically live streaming, their use in lighting the shot accompanied by the camera and live feed aids in turn the projection that I am considering an alternative element of the performance; creating the fusion between performance and documentation borne from technology.

Amongst Mitchell's Foley actors, set on the props tables onstage, sit various notebooks and photographs of the staging for sections of her complicated filming<sup>32</sup>. In order to display the correct angle of a shot, whilst considering lighting for example, and not prohibit the setting up of the next section of filming, the documents became a necessary performing document: performing as part of the event, whilst documentary in nature. This example encourages hybridization when analyzing the nature of the performance and the documents involved within the performance, through seeing the documents as both integral to the performance and to the documentation of the performance thereafter. This 'original' interpretation of the documents of performance, I argue, allows for the

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<sup>31</sup> National Theatre, 2014, (accessed: 24/10/2014).

<sup>32</sup> National Theatre, 2014, (accessed: 24/10/2014).

potentially archival material such as notebooks, which need not have been used onstage but could have in fact been directed immediately to the NT Archives as relics of the rehearsal process, to be ‘live’ once more through their use within the performances; in addition to being held as archival works once the run of the performance has ended. This position offers a theoretical shift away from the causal argument assumed of documentation following performance, and instead enables the relics of the archives theoretically, into the performance. In the case of Mitchell’s Foley actors, this argument is practical also, with the actors relying upon the document’s re-animation to make sense of the live performance itself. To be discussed within the thesis, I argue that this two-way relationship between performance and document as identified above displays that the notebook, for example, possesses an ‘unmarked liveness’, through its potential as both performative and documentary, in theory and practice. The near simultaneous use of camera scripts necessary to enable the filming of NT Live productions will also be discussed in relation to the cyclical relationship proposed between performance and documentation.

Writing on the nature of the photographic document in relation to technology, theorist Roland Barthes notes:

I was overcome by an “ontological” desire: I wanted to learn at all costs what Photography was “in itself,” by what essential feature it was to be distinguished from the community of images. Such a desire really meant that beyond the evidence provided by technology and usage, and despite its tremendous contemporary expansion, I wasn’t sure that Photography existed, that it had a “genius” of its own (Barthes, 2000: 3).

It is with a desire akin to Barthes that this thesis aims to unpack the ontological nature of performance and documentation. In contestation with the above example, in which Mitchell utilizes photographs to aid her technology, Barthes considers advanced technology to have altered the nature of each document or photograph. Likewise, and furthering the claims made by Kirby about the newly urgent need to document performance, I propose that the technologization of performance, from the use of digital cameras to time lapse video and live streaming, has also altered the nature of its documentation. Yves Klein's famous *Leap into the Void* (1960) for example, to be discussed in detail later, documents a performance of a leap that in reality did not take place, but was instead forged from several similar photographs in a dark room<sup>33</sup>. Demonstrating the importance of documentation to performance, given that without the (forged) photograph(s) there would be no 'evidence' of the leap, the example further questions the ontological nature of both performance and documentation and as a result demands a rethinking of both their individual and combined definitions. The need for rethinking is made all the more urgent considering the advanced technology available such as Photoshop, the design package intended to alter documents with ease, or apps such as Instagram, much like a modernized version of the adapted darkroom negatives of Klein.

Further to Klein's leap in questioning the idea of performance as individual or reproduced, film and art philosopher Noël Carroll discusses the notion of mass art: art which is intended to be reproduced to create commodity status for the work, thus the documentation and reproduced version of the works

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<sup>33</sup> See *ARTnews*, 2010, (accessed: 24/10/14).

becomes the work or performance itself; thereby undoing the ephemeral quality of performance via technology. When considering the notion of enhancement in relation to mass art, the potential of technology and its impact upon performance is of significance. As with the example of NT Live which makes theatre productions into filmic commodities in so far as their easy access and delivery to a mass audience alters their essence as ‘evanescent’ (Schechner, 1974: 118) works as described by Schechner, the reproduced works change from ‘performance’ to ‘something other than performance’ (Phelan, 1993: 146), under the guise of technology. The ‘ontology’ of performance, predicated upon the notion of the work of art, centres itself on the ephemeral (Phelan, 1993: 146). That performance works, under the influence of technology and mass art, may exceed their duration into the realms of previously termed ‘documentation’, confuses the binary between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’, and thereby their ontological states<sup>34</sup>. I propose expanding the linear movement of ‘performance’ towards ‘documentation’, or rather, ‘performance↔documentation’ and will prove that under the influence of technological innovation such as live streaming, ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ have become interchangeable.

## The Field

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<sup>34</sup> The discussion referred to concerns the differences between works which are performed and works which have the potential to perform. I would suggest that this relationship is mirrored in the relationship between performance and documentation, the latter possessing a sort of kinesthetic energy, the potential to perform, or what I am referring to as an ‘unmarked liveness’. Nicholas Wolterstorff considers the ontological status of the work of performance as ‘immensely perplexing’ (Wolterstorff, 1975: 116).



This thesis will interrogate the use of technology in contemporary performance, paying particular attention to live streaming of Mitchell's media performances at the National Theatre and the case of the NT Live project. It will also take up and enter current debates about performance and documentation, regarding their increasingly merging states due to the presence of technology. I will ask: how has technology altered both the form and function of performance and its documentation, and question whether or not the terms 'performance' and 'documentation' are still effective in light of their changing presence via technology. I aim to address this changing presence of performance and documentation, and consider that the effect of technology on performance has altered the relationship between the two states. I argue for the disrupted ontologies of performance and documentation, echoing theorists Rosemary Klich and Edward Scheer's sentiments that 'perceptions are affected and enhanced by media technologies in such a way that we will need to talk about the ontologies of performance rather than understanding performance as a singular essence' (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 2). I identify the intervention of documentation, via technology, as interrupting this path and highlight a cyclical and rejuvenating flow between performance and documentation as a proposed alternative state in order to produce a more relevant or timely model.

### *Performance and Documentation*

Before considering the relationship between performance and documentation, it seems necessary to define their status individually. Diana Taylor suggests that 'Performances function as verbal acts of transfer, transmitting social knowledge,

memory and a sense of identity through reiterated, or what Richard Schechner has called “twice behaved behaviour” (Taylor, 2003: 2)<sup>35</sup>. In citing Schechner and the concept of the twice, hence, already behaved behaviours, Taylor immediately draws attention to the repetitious element of performance. ‘The many uses of the word performance point to the complex, seemingly contradictory, and at times mutually sustaining or complicated layers of referentiality’ (Taylor, 2003: 3). Writing on performance and documentation, Taylor’s work considers the difference between the ‘archive’ and the ‘repertoire’, and their relation to cultural memory. For Taylor, the archive contains documents that can be stored, such as writings or photographs of the past. The repertoire on the other hand, refers to things that cannot be archived, such as memories and ephemera. Taylor suggests that the two, the archive and the repertoire, work in conjunction:

The live performance can never be captured or transmitted through the archive. A video of a performance is not a performance, though it often comes to replace the performance as a *thing* in itself (the video is part of the archive; what it represents is part of the repertoire). Embodied memory, because it is live, exceeds the archive’s ability to capture it’ (Taylor, 2003: 20).

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<sup>35</sup> Tracy C. Davis also writes on the notion of twice-behaved, relived experiences. ‘As we negotiate life as social beings – sometimes but not always consciously, sometimes but not overtly – we perform ... This can be codified and held in common, as ritual, or not; coordinated and aestheticized, as theatre, or not; quotidian and mundane, the lived experience of the everyday, or not’ (Davis, 2008: 7).

Despite this, Taylor concedes that the objects of an archive sustain and literally exist past the live acts themselves<sup>36</sup>. Interestingly, and following Jacques Derrida's introductory thoughts to *Archive Fever, A Freudian Impression* (1996), Taylor notes the etymological roots of the term archive can be traced to the Greek *arkhe*, considered as 'the first place' (Taylor, 2003: 19) commanding power through knowledge. In this respect, Taylor considers that the archive sustains its initial power. I would propose that the archive pre-dates the live repertoire, via its situating in the 'first place', as well as post-dating through sustaining its knowledge. The relationship discussed between the archive and the repertoire reinforces my claim for a reversible relationship between the states of performance and documentation; rather than accepting their relationship as linear and causal, the documents effectively become performances anew, hence the relationship becomes theoretically cyclical, which I am perceiving as a reversible reaction.

For Taylor, it is through the negotiation of the archive and the repertoire that memories (in this case of performances) are retained and stored socially as memory or materially as objects in the archive. Though the two work differently, their overlapping ensures the longevity of works. Furthering her analysis, Taylor suggests that the archive is digital and that the repertoire is live and visual (Taylor, 2003: 21). Despite the conventional assumptions that the live precedes the digital archive, Taylor does not consider this as always logical. She claims that 'systems of transmission – like the digital – complicate any single binary

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<sup>36</sup> Walter Benjamin writes in 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction' that 'In the case of the art object, a most sensitive nucleus - namely, its authenticity - ... is the essence of all that is transmissible from its beginning, ranging from its substantive duration to its testimony to the history which it has experienced' (Benjamin, 1999: 215). As Benjamin discusses the nature of art, considering photography as well as film, a parallel can be drawn between Taylor's thinking on the durability of work through both material means and memory and Benjamin's concerns with authenticity in the light of mechanical reproduction.

formation’, akin to my argument which proposes a circular rather than linear path between performance and documentation. Rather than seeing an ‘unmarked liveness’ in documents which I argue work as performances anew, Taylor promotes instead that ‘multiple forms of embodied acts are always present, though in a constant state of againness’, an ““acted document”” (Taylor, 2003: 22; 21; 12)<sup>37</sup>; and upon revisiting her monograph, writes nearly a decade later on the contracting presence of the archive and the repertoire in light of the digital. Taylor considers the uses of the Internet, with specific referencing to digital databases, the ‘archives’, which store information online, as in a constant state of renewal, more akin with the live nature of the repertoire.

We are all seemingly “here,” live, now, online, no matter where the “here” might be. The “here” of the repertoire is immediate, the “here” of the archive is distant, but locatable, the here of the web is immediate and (only apparently) unlocatable (Taylor, 2012).

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<sup>37</sup> Taylor’s use of the archive and the repertoire as material and memory of documents can be related to the structural linguist Ferdinand de Saussure’s use of the terms *langue* and *parole*, where *langue* refers to the structure of language, and *parole* the alternating meanings, or the statistical (Boon, 1972: 66). Claude Lévi-Strauss suggests that analysis of *langue* must consider its history and moves to stabilisation, a diachronic approach, but that because of its process of evolution as a process of disappearance, a synchronic model is adopted which inevitably also falls short due to its ‘state of being formed’ (Boon, 1972: 67). A relationship is established between *langue* and *parole*, and diachronic and synchronic models of analysis, where the meaning of language and its structures are considered through their parts and their relationships to each other. Taylor’s terms of the archive and the repertoire work in relation to one another to relay the objects within a literal or metaphorical archive. Creating order from experience, Lévi-Strauss notes ‘A cracked bell, alone surviving the work of time, will never give forth the ring of bygone harmonies’ (Boon, 1972: 63), thus the relationship between the literal archive and the memory allows for the durability of works for Taylor in parallel with a synchronic and diachronic approach to analysis as modelled.

The notion of the here and not here of the online space confuses the notion of the repertoire, as ‘real’ time and presence are extended<sup>38</sup>, whilst the archive is absorbed within the same space of immediate information; confusing the binary of the live and the archive via digital interference.

Taylor’s concept of separating performance and documentation into the archive and repertoire is useful in so far as it shows the complications involved considering the after/life of performance, demonstrating as I am claiming, that documentation feeds performance anew via technology; as with Taylor’s example of digital interfaces. However, by initially separating documents into the archive and the repertoire, Taylor arguably creates further confusion, which I attempt to overcome through my overall terming of documents as possessing a sense of ‘unmarked liveness’. As a scholar concerned with cultural memory, Taylor’s concept of the archive and the repertoire demonstrates a more human side to the collection of memories, permitting audience and readers alike a time for nostalgia, and private and public history to be explored. Stepping aside from Taylor’s socio-cultural emphasis, Okwui Enwezor has written on the uses of documents in contemporary art. Studying photography in particular, he writes that ‘photography is simultaneously the documentary evidence and the archival record ... because the camera is literally an archiving machine, every photograph, every film is *a priori* an archival object’ (Enwezor, 2008: 12). Creating a relationship between documentation and archives, the strength of the medium to Enwezor is photography’s ability to document events, which in turn the archives, referred to by audiences, artists and other scholars, enhancing my argument of sublimation which sees a transience between the chemical states;

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<sup>38</sup> Marc Augé reflects on the idea of supermodernity or overmodernity, a state specified by its excess of time in an accelerating world; an excess of space in a shrinking world; combined with an excess of individualization brought about by the first two concepts (Augé, 1995: 8).

in this instance, a simultaneous display of performance and document developed through the chemicals in the photographic process. Furthering Taylor's personal repertoire and public archive, Enwezor considers every photograph to be 'endowed with this principle of uniqueness' (Enwezor, 2008: 11). The photograph itself is therefore seen as individual; the strength for Enwezor however, is that the photograph may be subject to reproduction, which constitutes each photograph as simultaneously a document of an event and a (potential) public archive of a work. Echoing the sentiments of Foucault, Enwezor concludes, 'history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself' (Enwezor, 2008: 23)<sup>39</sup>. Within the photograph, the archive and the document meet.

Especially useful within the medium of photography, digital processing provides instant feedback, which inevitably blurs the binaries of the moment of live performance and the digital archive as discussed by Taylor. Artists such as Marina Abramović and Bill Viola acknowledge that there may be a difference between archival and linear time and have used the medium of digital photography to devise practical works that manipulate linear time and affect archival time<sup>40</sup>. Writing on time, Schneider notes, 'As the logic goes, performance is so radically 'in time' (with time considered linear) that it cannot reside in its material traces and therefore 'disappears'' (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 66). Schneider's argument here suggests that as time passes

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<sup>39</sup> Cited from Foucault's *The Archeology of Knowledge* (Foucault, 1972: 7): "The document ... is no longer for history an inert material through which it tries to reconstitute what men have done or said, the events of which only the trace remains; history is now trying to define within the documentary material itself unities, totalities, series, relations".

<sup>40</sup> See also the documentary work of Craigie Horsfield, portraying bibliographic details and stills of events such as the Twin Towers bombing, preserved in archival remains, through his large-scale photographs and installations (Princenthal, 2007: pp.164-169).

performance ceases, thus ensuring performance's ephemerality; suggesting that any material objects that remain of the performance exist as documents to be held in the archive. Schneider provides an alternative view and discusses a working/performing archive. Within this theory two notions of time are presented: time passing (as in linear time) and time passed (as performance ends, displayed thereafter through the work/ing archive). The movement between *time*, reinforces my idea of a cyclical path of documentation, due to the possibility of the remaking of documents as performances anew, a viewpoint not shared by Taylor.

The 'live artist' Marina Abramović (though the title 'live artist' itself seems problematic here), (re)staged iconic performance art works in *Seven Easy Pieces* (2005), none of which had been subjected to rigorous documentation when they were originally performed. After the first occurrence of each (re)performance, the documented footage of that performance was played within the live showing of the performance on the following night. Klich and Scheer, writing on Abramović's piece reported that, 'Abramović made extensive use of video both as an elaborate record of the entire event and as a kind of dialogue with the live presentation' (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 84). Klich and Scheer ponder a question posed by Auslander, which asks 'whether performance recreations based on documentation actually recreate the underlying performance or perform the documentation' (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 83); and find that one reviewer considered the filming of Abramović's work a performance in itself (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 84). This cycling of performing, filming and documenting reinforces my claims for an 'unmarked liveness' within the states of performance and documentation in that the works at every level of

performance exhibits traits of both ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’. Klich and Scheer, too, claim that the works are examples of ‘re-mediation’; re-mediation can be seen through Abramović’s reworking of the seven pieces, her filming of each performance and her replaying of her own performances within her next performances. Klich and Scheer call this state of remediation in work, ‘another document of history’, ‘a kind of live action documentation’, or a ‘living history’ (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 86). The contradictions within these terms cause theoretical confusion, but also show the impracticality of the neatness of Taylor’s archive and repertoire when faced with the untidy and unquantifiable states of performance and documentation when in play.

#### *The Media(tized) in Performance and Documentation*

Roselee Goldberg suggests that live art is received and effectively completed by an audience that mediates the im-mediate work, or in other words, audience responses and presence are required for the performance to take effect and be called ‘performance’. Goldberg continues that the definition of ‘live’ art, and importantly, its strength, is that it is a presentation of work by artists who give their work in ‘real time’ and whose work ‘ceased to exist the moment the performance was over’ (Goldberg, 2004: 15). These claims are written within Goldberg’s introduction to *Performance – live art since the 1960s* (2004), a text that forms an archive of live art pieces, presented through photographs and detailed description. Goldberg concludes that live art can only be confirmed as an artistic practice through such documentation. Admitting that such works were often overlooked and ‘unexamined because this material could no longer be seen,



only described', Goldberg considers a correspondence between performance and writing, arguing that 'even the lecturer or critic "performs" a text, as I do too in these pages' (Goldberg, 2004: 9). *Performance – live art since the 1960s* was borne from *Performance: live art, 1909 to the present* (1979). Subsequent rewritings also, demonstrate the continued life of the documentation of performance.

My initial emphasis on Goldberg's definition of live art is to establish firmly her stance that live art has been idealized as an instantaneous, ephemeral form (Goldberg, 2004: 9). However, to meet the demands of funding bodies and to help disseminate their work, artists need some form of documentation as evidence or proof that an event took place, hence Goldberg's drive to publish such an archival text, describing the work as a 'missing piece in the big picture of art history studies' (Goldberg, 2004: 9). Whilst I acknowledge this drive, there still seems to be a contradiction within Goldberg's writing, as she considers herself 'performing' within the pages of the text. There are, to use Goldberg's own definitions of performance, no performers physically present, nor are there any audience members to directly mediate this 'event'. In its very nature, the book is 'permanent', certainly more permanent than most of the so-called ephemeral works of live art written about within the text at least. As the text, or Goldberg's 'performance', will not cease to exist in the way a piece of live art will cease to exist, the document cannot be seen as 'performing' according to Goldberg's own definition. That the text has a predecessor and successor is also relevant when considering the life of Goldberg's written 'performance', displaying its longevity, and moreover, its stark opposition to lives of the live art works contained within the texts. J. L. Austin writes on constative (statemented)

and performative (demonstrative) utterances, describing the latter as alternatively, ‘operative’:

One technical term that comes nearest to what we need is perhaps “operative”, as it is used strictly by lawyers in referring to that part, i.e. those clauses, of an instrument which serves to effect the transition (conveyance or what not) which is its main object, whereas the rest of the document merely “recites” the circumstances in which the transaction is to be effected (Austin, 1976: 7).

Despite Goldberg’s definition, her text from this standpoint could operate functionally as archival or ‘perform’ as a re-presentation of works.

My main concern here is not to glean a specific answer but to highlight the disruption documentation has on performance theory. This problematization borne from documenting performances has developed mainly from the addition of media, such as NT Live and Mitchell’s work as examples, hence its close involvement with the word ‘medium’, the process by which this occurs. The concept that links these is the *immediate*. According to Goldberg, live performances communicate via immediate showings to an audience who mediate the live event. Arguably documentation also, as Goldberg suggests, ‘mediates’, through the words contained within Goldberg’s text, that work to mediate between a performance and a new ‘audience’, the reader. This realization affects theories of documentation, as the previously considered secondary events<sup>41</sup>, such

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<sup>41</sup> Amelia Jones wrote in 1997 on pieces of live art, which she had researched through documentation alone, given that she was not alive when the art was initially presented. Her thoughts were revised in a second version of the paper, which effectively re-documents the works. ‘We are at a turning point where claims of the special status of performance as

as the archival text, can be seen to effectively work as though they were another performance. This realization calls into question the term ‘live art’, or the notion of the live artist, because documentation, which is ‘permanent’, performs similarly to live performances. Auslander argues that the concept of ‘liveness’ only evolved due to the mediatized presence of works, such as recordings played on the radio (Auslander, 2008: 59). He claims that due to the increasing presence of recorded works, there was an expanded need to define and categorize works, as a way to differentiate between the newly devised recorded (mediatized) performances and the initial ‘live’ performances. Ultimately, further confusion resulted from the need to define such terms, shown by the varying uses of the term ‘live’.

Arguably the notion that mediatization became apparent via ‘liveness’ can be developed, with ‘performance’ becoming apparent due to ‘documentation’. Demonstrating their cyclical relationship, analyzed by Goldberg as she reports on the abovementioned jump of Yves Klein in *Leap into the Void* (1960), the final documentation of the work showed a man leaping from a window onto a street, when in actuality this leap was staged for a photographer ten months after a first, undocumented leap (Goldberg, 2004: 33). Considering that this initial leap was undocumented, the existence of the performance remains ambiguous. As there was no audience present to mediate the work as such, Klein was not even working as a ‘performer’ in this context, if we are to follow Goldberg’s definitions of live art. Ironically, it is through the second leap, and its series of photographs combined to create a documented shot of the ‘performance’, that audiences believe the action took place. As the second leap

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authentically delivering ‘presence’ are in direct conflict with the simultaneous efforts to raise the status and economic value of performance events by displaying them in museums’ (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 199).

was witnessed and documented, it could be claimed that documentation is needed for a performance to be labelled as such. Auslander suggests that liveness only occurred due to a tautological response to a condition (Auslander, 2008: 59). Created from a need to define a developed discourse, the notion of ‘liveness’ arose due to its counterpart’s emergence; arguably documentation predates performance, and as with Klein’s jump, permits the performance itself to exist<sup>42</sup>.

Goldberg cites examples by artists such as Mary Kelly, Ana Mendieta and Vito Acconci, who all performed events privately, only exhibiting the documentation publically, and questions whether or not the exhibitions were performances or examples of documentation. In *Photo-Piece* (1969) Acconci walked alone with a camera. Every time he blinked, he took a photo. Because this was a private act, with no audience, I question whether or not this walk should be considered a ‘performance’ (Schechner, 2006: 22). The subsequent exhibition of Acconci’s work, involving an audience to mediate the event, is more performance driven, though with no official performer the documentation took centre stage as ‘performance’. The walk too could plausibly be identified as ‘documentation’, as a performed act with the intention of display after its creation. The terms ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ are significantly blurred within these works, to the extent that the states become simultaneous, and can no longer be justifiably termed as individual entities. A developed example can be found in the case of the National Theatre’s live streaming projects, where the use of live feeds and video technology has enabled simultaneity of displays, which arguably blur the states of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ once again.

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<sup>42</sup> See also Dag Alveng’s *The Photographer Shoots Himself* (1981) where Alveng captures his fall via the use of a trigger attached to a wire and held by the artist. That the leap into the water was unseen questions the nature of the piece, as the documentation of the work was presented as performance itself.

### *Video (art)*

The introduction of video art complicates the binary established between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ further. With video’s moving quality which allows for seemingly fluid transferability between the recorded and the live, or ‘document’ and ‘performance’, a move towards their simultaneity via the aid of media is demonstrated through video. Indeed, Schneider writes that ‘An ongoing tangle – a meantime – between live and dead, or live and recording, cannot usefully be approached only by way of strictly binarized antonyms’ (Schneider, 2011: 90). Dan Graham’s work, *Present Continuous Pasts* (1974) provides evidence of such a tangling between the live and recorded states. Graham’s use of a time delay recording device, as well as audience members moving around a mirrored space as ‘performers’, juxtaposes ‘real time and time passing’, (Goldberg, 2004: 180) as viewers can watch their reflected selves, and later, see themselves – watching themselves in the mirrors – via the time delayed video monitor. *Present Continuous Pasts* is more of a practical and theoretical conundrum than a title in this instance. Goldberg cites video artist Joan Jonas, speaking about the close relationship of live performance and video imagery; “‘One could take the place of the other, live activity switching to an image or vice versa’” (Goldberg, 2004: 180). Relating to the case of NT Live once more and specifically to the filming of the production *This House* (2013), a small number of the audience were allowed onstage to fill the house (set) and become the politicians of Parliament sitting in the Commons. Given the screens that are on display at the National Theatre itself, showing their audience the exact shots that the cinema viewers will see of the production, the audience onstage

experience the uncanny act of watching themselves go *live*; creating bodies which act as performing documents.

Enabling a contraction of image and body via media, and involving an engaging use of sound and film, performance works such as those developed by the Wooster Group question the concept of the ‘original’, as voices and bodies blend via their use of technology. An early scene in the Wooster’s *To You, The Birdie!* (2002), roughly based on Jean Racine’s *Phèdre*, involves a torso of a live body intersecting with the lower limbs of a digital body, achieved by an actor standing behind the TV screen upon which the images were relayed via pre-recorded video. This meeting of body parts creates juxtaposition between the live and the digital. Further complicating such interplay between the live and the digital, the voices of the group are split in terms of voice and body, thus an, ‘I’ may not relate to the body with whom ‘I’ would normally be associated. This display of detachment is enhanced by technology as the actors are then doubly fragmented, in thought and presence, liveness and imagery (Parker-Starbuck, 2011: 125). Margaret Morse considers the challenges such works present, expressing that ‘Once the simultaneity of liveness becomes instant feedback between images and the world, an inversion takes place in what was once called representation: neither images nor the world is first’ (Morse, 1998: 21). This set of contradictions between body and image enhance the Wooster Group’s world of palimpsests and layers of textual references set against complicated multi-media. The works become instead examples of inter-medial performance or the ‘representation of one medium in another’ (Bolter and Grusin, 2000: 45), in appearance, if not actuality; ‘Intermedial theatre may be both physically based and on-screen; experiences may be both actual and virtual; spaces may be both

public and private; bodies may be both present and absent' (Bay-Cheng, 2010: 17)<sup>43</sup>. I would extend this claim further and suggest that inter-medial works present the potential for simultaneity between performance and documentation, due to their use of recording and video technologies onstage, which arguably double as tools to aid both performance and documentation, or rather what I am referring to as 'performance↔documentation', indicating a homogenized version of the two states and a sense of 'unmarked liveness' within the display.

According to Michael Rush, video art evolved from a chance recording of the Pope's entourage down Fifth Avenue in 1965. Nam June Paik, having purchased the first version of the Sony Portapak, spontaneously filmed the event, later showing it as a 'performance' of sorts at the Café au Go Go to likeminded contemporaries (Rush, 2005: 85)<sup>44</sup>. I consider this work as an amalgamation of performance: in its presentation as such to friends, and documentation, given its nature as a recording of a past event; thereby reinforcing my claims of 'performance↔documentation', which argues for free movement between the two states. Rush reflects on video art, insisting on the separation between video as documentary and video as art. Rush describes the video artist Viola as a creator of 'visual poems', seeing Viola as essentially the maker of performing documents (Rush, 2005: 152). In an installation similar to the aforementioned *Present Continuous Pasts*, Viola used a mirrored projection surface, constantly spinning, to literally force a reflection of a mind obsessed with the self in *Slowly Turning Narrative* (1992). Extending the cyclical feel to works in form and function, another piece, *Buried Secrets* (1995) consisted of five rooms that were

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<sup>43</sup> A greater analysis of intermedia will occur in chapter three.

<sup>44</sup> Cited as the 'father of video art', Nam June Paik took 'advantage of the first portable video recorders in the mid-1960s effectively to pioneer the use of video within performance' (Klich and Scheer, 2012: 31).

circuited by the audience. As if cautious of breaking the cycle, the audience was encouraged to continue lapping the circuit once they had left the fifth room. Otto Neumaier, commenting on the content of Viola's work, highlights the quotations within pieces and repeated motifs; the pieces work as citations and reflections of themselves, cyclical in form as interrelated pieces also, effectively presenting within each performance a trace of Viola's previous pieces or a performing archive of work (Neumaier, 2004: 59). In one such performance, *I do not know what it is I am like* (1986) sequences of footage are edited and cut, meaning that upon playing, the images do not correlate with their previous sequences despite their similarity. The emphasis here lies with the 'simultaneity of things past, present and future' (Neumaier, 2004: 67), and Neumaier notes that it was only the use of grammar that showed the difference between each tense amongst the performing documents. Viola's work here theoretically complicates the conventional relationship between performance and documentation, much like my claim for sublimation and the zone of 'unmarked liveness', in allowing for a slippage between the two states through a non-linear approach to representation. Neumaier claims:

We can conclude that Viola's work demonstrates the possibility of conceptions of time other than the one of an objectively measureable linear sequence of temporal points with which we are familiar from our contemporary scientific episteme (Neumaier, 2004: 64).

Viola's images themselves are likewise manipulated, and in many works he uses extreme slow motion, giving the impression of the freezing of time. As an image



stands supposedly still, an audience is permitted the time to stop, and the opportunity to reflect, creating ‘the ability to extend the self into time with the capacity to anticipate and to recall’ (Neumaier, 2004: 67). Viola, who mediates in this way between movement and stillness, permits a crossing between the live and the lived, a live performance and the document with which it is remembered. Theoretically speaking, Viola’s work demonstrates the cyclical relationship between performance and documentation that I am proposing.

### *Performance Remains*

Schneider explores documentation in *Performance Remains* (2011), an arguably problematic concept. Citing Henri Bergson, Schneider writes that time is a series of moments, held frozen, before lapsing. It is the movement from one freeze to the next that provides a sequence of continuous action as opposed to a linear trajectory (Schneider, 2011: 90). Recalling Viola’s held moments, forged through his apparent ‘freezing’ of slow moving images, a time for reflection ensues for the viewer, as they view images more document based than video in nature. It is this continual tussling between live performance and documentation in practice that supports Schneider’s concept that performance remains, or as I am arguing, that documents remain in a semi-live state of ‘unmarked liveness’; indicated by the use of the double-headed arrow, which symbolizes free flow. I argue that the analogy of sublimation allows a cyclical, rather than linear movement between the states of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’, enabling a revision of their entities as entwined, rather than insisting upon their static

nature, an arguable undercurrent found within Schneider's emphasis of performance *remains*.

One of Schneider's arguments focuses on the theatrical script. The script, a piece of text or a document as it is generally understood, which is ordinarily pre-written to model the action within a dramatic event, is perceived by Schneider to be temporal in nature. Schneider continues that as the script is temporal, it requires some transition to alter its state to 'permanent'; this transition occurs through its live playing. Schneider argues that performing the script acts as a recording or documenting of its existence. Subverting the preconceived order of play, where the performance is seen as ephemeral and transitory, Schneider believes that the live performance is needed in order for the script, or the document, to remain. She says, 'To consider the live a record of precedent material flips on its head the supposition that the live is that which requires recording to remain' (Schneider, 2011: 90). I argue that Schneider's argument changes the conventional causal relationship between performance and documentation; the notion of linearity associated with performance is maintained, although a subverted linearity is proposed in that 'documentation' enables 'performance'. Schneider's critique of the conventional relationship between performance and documentation works as a useful model upon which my analogy of sublimation may develop. However, I question Schneider's argument for performance remaining via its documentation, as with her example of live performance requiring a script in order for that performance to 'remain' (Schneider, 2011: 90), because whilst this notion subverts causal relationships, the concept of 'remaining' alludes to a sedentary relationship between performance and documentation; even if a script 'remains' as via its

documentation I argue that documentation such as scripts continue as performance, *post* 'live' performance, creating a cyclical and continual interplay between 'performance' and 'documentation'. My use of a double-headed arrow symbolizes the relationship and allows visual distinction between the traditionally separate states, whilst demonstrating theoretically their fluidity enabled by the use of technology. *The Habit of Art*, one of the first plays to be screened by NT Live in 2010 after a successful run at the National Theatre, considers the issues of performing and writing art through playwright Alan Bennett's work. *The Habit of Art* is based on 'actors' attempting a rehearsal of a fictional meeting between W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten. As the 'actors' attempt to conjure this event, which in reality never occurred, it is their 'script' (of the play within the play) that documents the hypothetical meeting, only made permanent by the performing of its scenes to the audiences watching the National Theatre and NT Live's performance. Writing confuses once more the binary between 'performance' and 'documentation'.

I argue that 'performance' ought not to be considered as separate to, but *containing* 'documentation' within its forms and functions, in theory and in practice, and would further seek a renaming of 'performance' as a result, whilst acknowledging the impracticality of this notion. This thesis argues then, that not only have the theoretical states of 'performance' and 'documentation' altered under technology, but suggests that importantly the *definition* of 'performance' should also alter to incorporate 'documentation' within its remit, only separated throughout the thesis to aid understanding of their initial position as separate subjects. I propose 'performance ⇔ documentation' as the visual illustration of the metaphorical merging of the two states, with the double-headed arrow

suggesting fluidity and movement between the states. Effectively, the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’, which enables subliminal passing between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ or ‘documentation’ and ‘performance’, describes the double-headed arrow that combines the individual terms. Thus the overall ‘ontology’ or essence of *performance* as suggested by Phelan, is disrupted by technology, to include theoretically, elements of the documentary, identified formerly as a separate entity.

Chapter contents: *Reconstruct, Redevelop, Regenerate*

The thesis is split into three sections, with each showing the progression of live streaming at the National Theatre, and beyond, described as *Reconstruct, Redevelop, Regenerate*<sup>45</sup>. Each section is in turn divided into a chapter on Katie Mitchell’s media and NT Live. *Reform* and *Rewrite* are the first two chapters of the thesis, under the heading of *Reconstruct*. *Reform*, refers to the re-forming of Mitchell and Virginia Woolf’s writing; as Mitchell and her company grapple with the complicated text *The Waves*. The chapter focuses particularly on the process of adapting from writing, and forming anew to create a way to interpret Woolf’s work on stage. The use of live streaming and technology is key to this process and a discussion on *Waves*, the result, ensues. *Rewrite* similarly discusses an alternative path of display, as required by Alan Bennett when writing his 2010 *The Habit of Art*. As with Mitchell, Bennett was forced to reconstruct his narrative; serendipitously the delay in display due to rewriting enabled Bennett’s production to be included in the first ‘season’ of the NT Live project, altering the habit of viewing performance for Bennett followers, and

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<sup>45</sup> The titles of the thesis are not influenced by Margherita Laera’s *Theatre and Adaptation: Return, Rewrite, Repeat* (2014).

National Theatre viewers, thereafter. I consider the idea of unspoken conversations, reflecting the narrative of *The Habit of Art* and its nature as nearly omitted from the NT Live repertoire; as well as the various levels of performance from writing to staging. *Reconstruct* refers to an altering of not only individuals, such as director Mitchell and playwright Bennett in reinterpreting their work, but also indicates a new construction of the National Theatre in how work is displayed to its audience.

*Redevelop* indicates a movement away from *Reconstruct* where initial experimentation shifts to a practiced art. *Repeat* focuses on the notion of intermedia and evidences the progression between *Waves* and Mitchell's media work from 2008, ...*Some trace of her*. With a repeated run of *Waves* produced almost simultaneously with the premiere of ...*Some trace of her*, I want to argue that the impressions of the media are repeated and redeveloped during Mitchell's later media work. In *Reborn*, I likewise consider the redevelopment of the NT Live project through a consideration of 'aNTi Live' that reflects the life and death of performances working between live and archived works as well the effect of time that alters the nature of performance on these states. *This House*, written by James Graham, focuses on the life and death of the Labour party during the hung Parliament of 1974-1979. In addition to studying Graham's path through the archives, which work as speaking documents, to the Houses of Parliament and the relics inside that project a performance themselves, I consider the development of Graham's writing also; analyzing a subsequent television screening of another political piece, *The Vote* (2015). *Redevelop* makes significant past performances, reperformed or documented anew to create again.

*Regenerate* identifies a later stage in the development of Mitchell's work and the NT Live project. Both case studies in the chapters *Relive* and *Revive* consider work produced beyond the National Theatre, shown at the Barbican Centre. Mitchell's departure from the National Theatre saw her move to central Europe, particularly Berlin, to show her media work. Whilst the *Forbidden Zone* was screened and subsequently staged at the Barbican, Mitchell's return to the National Theatre occurred within the same month of the staging. I discuss the apparent 'exile' that forced Mitchell's move to Europe<sup>46</sup>, and the various levels of staging and screening, highlighted within the narrative of the production that displays a set of interwoven times, or relived regenerations, inspired by events from the First World War. Several months after this production, Lyndsey Turner's *Hamlet* (2015) was both staged and screened at the Barbican Centre, starring Benedict Cumberbatch as the Prince of Denmark. NT Live screened the production that proved incredibly popular, selling out on each night of its run<sup>47</sup>. My analysis in *Revive* considers the various iterations of levels of live borne from the simultaneous screening and staging by NT Live. I identify the term 'paradocumentation'<sup>48</sup> as a holistic entity that metaphorically incorporates previous performances as documentation of new works. The fan base of Cumberbatch for example is discussed in relation to an audience survey, which questions the nature of live screening and online interpretations or documentation working as performance anew.

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<sup>46</sup> *The Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>47</sup> *The Guardian*, 2015, (accessed: 30/12/15).

<sup>48</sup> The terms 'aNTi Live' and 'paradocumentation' evolved through my pursuing of case studies for this thesis. Their purpose is to indicate the various readings of the 'unmarked liveness': the development within my own understanding, as well as regarding the progression of media work throughout the decade highlighted. Whilst the 'unmarked liveness' is incorporated less within *Relive* and *Revive*, where I take time to explore 'aNTi Live' and 'paradocumentation', the terms are intended to work as an advanced or alternative exploration of the same theme.

Whilst the thesis studies over a decade of work, the chapter's case studies are more focused. *Reconstruct* analyzes work produced between 2006-2008; *Reform* from 2008-2013; *Regenerate* from 2015-2016. Working through the case studies chronologically reflects the overall aims of the thesis. However, it should be noted that during these times many fruitful projects were analyzed that informed the research. For example, *Five Truths*, Mitchell's video installation, was displayed at the National Theatre in 2011; the last media work to show at the National Theatre before her return from Europe as discussed in chapter five. 2012 saw the NT Live production of *She Stoops to Conquer* that informed much of chapter four. The original production of *This House* was shown in the National Theatre's Cottesloe in 2012, before its move and live streaming from sister theatre the Lyttelton in 2013. Whilst I cite the *Forbidden Zone* as shown in 2016, the initial live streaming of the production was screened at the Barbican Centre in 2014. Naturally work has also continued beyond this decade: *Five Truths* continued its tour into 2017. Stanislavsky Electrotheatre, 2017, (accessed: 20/07/17). The influence of media and streamed works beyond 2016, as well as specific case studies of interest that extend the purpose of the thesis are discussed more fully in the conclusion.

## RECONSTRUCT

### REFORM: From radio play to video relay

Speaking in a workshop session, Katie Mitchell explained the need to visualize work as a director<sup>49</sup>. The key to working and reworking scenes and overall plot development, she honed the skill many years into her career. It was while breastfeeding her child that her visualization skills evolved; in breaking her mind into rooms dedicated to the various performances upon which she was working. Mitchell explained that whilst the obvious choice would be to grab a pen and paper and take notes, jotting ideas and documenting thoughts as she processed various plays, this choice was not an option: her child would become fixed and feed for hours and Mitchell felt obliged to stay rooted, not moving. Her only tool left to her, without pen, paper, laptop, video recorder or any other form of recording or editing device, was her mind. This vessel, staging up to eight or nine plays at once, reflecting her significance as a director and impressive workload, would for hours, devise, form, reform and *adapt*.

The pursuit of a career in directing was a focus from a young age. Directing even whilst at school, it was at university where Mitchell's mind wandered from page to stage. At Cambridge, Mitchell studied literature and became interested in Virginia Woolf. Mitchell's perseverance with Woolf was borne from an academic relationship, where *The Waves* became the subject of a 'special paper'.<sup>50</sup> The novel engaged Mitchell due to its imagistic qualities and

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<sup>49</sup> The two-day workshop (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2016) was held at the Barbican Centre to mark Mitchell's return after a period of work in Europe. The workshop was intended to coincide with Mitchell's production of the *Forbidden Zone*, but pre-dated by three weeks. As a result, much of the content, whilst related to the *Forbidden Zone* and Mitchell's works, focused instead on Mitchell's skills (and stories) as a director. Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

<sup>50</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.



from then on, Mitchell wanted to stage the difficult text. Her attempts to stage the novel were unresolved for a further twenty-three years. My focus here is to trace the constant cycling, forming and reforming, devising and adapting that quite literally projected *The Waves* onto the stage at the National Theatre. I am interested in how Mitchell solved her questions on staging a novel based on internal monologues through technological means. I will furthermore suggest that the relationship between the document and performance, between Woolf's text and Mitchell's reformed production, evokes a sense of 'unmarked liveness' between the various stages of documentation.

I will reference several theorists who influence my thinking on adaptation throughout the chapter, in an attempt to unravel the abstracted world of Mitchell's mind in reforming *The Waves* into a staged performance, *Waves* (2006), seventy-five years after its original publication. Julie Sanders in her work *Adaptation and Appropriation* (2006), for example, notes that 'meaning stems from the relationships between texts, relationships which encourage contrast and comparison' (Sanders, 2006: 8). Sanders highlights here the combining of texts, emphasizing the relationship between texts in furthering understanding and overall meaning<sup>51</sup>. In contrast to Sanders's interpretation, Geoffrey Wagner writes specifically on the adaptation of novels to cinema screenings, categorizing types of adaption. In his work *The Novel and the Cinema* (1975), 'transposition' relates to effectively a like-for-like version of the literary text on screen; 'commentary' provides an additional narrative to the literary text whilst

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<sup>51</sup> The relationship between outputs is of significance, especially when considering Mitchell's work. Whilst not the focus of this chapter, I dedicate time to the inter-relationship between Mitchell's media works in chapter three, suggesting that ...*Some trace of her* shares ideas and aesthetic qualities with *Waves*: the techniques and development of Mitchell's output furthers my overall argument that the performance of *Waves* can be seen as documented in ...*Some trace of her*. Sanders's assertion then that the relationship between texts offers themselves for contrast and comparison will be ripe for dissection latterly.

‘analogy’ describes an adaptation where a likened work to the text is created, comparable but quite distinct and distant from the ‘source’ text<sup>52</sup>. Although I will not attempt to categorize the level of adaptation practiced by Mitchell, the guidelines established in adapting novels to cinema enhance the thoughts of Sanders in tracing a pathway between the texts. This theoretical pathway, albeit across various genres, reinforces my argument on the changing relationship between performance and documentation. I argue that the various stages and incarnations of *The Waves*, from text to theatre and cinematic relay, reforms and challenges the received ideas about the relationship between performance and documentation, in that every stage of output is arguably both performance and documentation.

Wagner’s model is a useful frame to begin to understand the various guises of adaptation. The frame however, has its limitations and it is from those critiques that my overall sense of argument can be understood. In *Adaptation Studies, New Approaches* (2013), Christa Alberta-Crane and Dennis Cutchins question the ‘theoretically problematic’ use of categorization when describing adapted works, and highlight the apparent deficit between the initial and latter stages of adaptation.

In this [Wagner’s] model any more complex adaptation is more or less a deformation of the original work and a mutation of the possible perfect transposition. This approach may be theoretically problematic, but it is also wrongheaded. It makes the study of adaptation an exercise in negativity, a quest to discover where the film maker deviated from the

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<sup>52</sup> Analysis of the three types of adaptation begins on page 222 of Wagner’s 1975 work.

perfect original. The truth is that all adaptations are complex analogies. More importantly, adaptations, rather than being handicapped by their movements away from the earlier text, are often enabled by those differences (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013: 16).

I will return to the notion of the ‘original’ or ‘source’ text, as I feel that this is a problematic notion when discussing adaptation in conjunction with performance and documentation. Here, however, I acknowledge Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins’s protest against Wagner’s insinuation of deterioration; that further adaptations lessen the perfection of the product. Wagner’s frame attempts to isolate stages or levels of representation: ‘transposition’, ‘commentary’ and ‘analogy’ (Wagner, 1975: 222); comparable to this chapter’s citing of the life and work of Woolf, adapted for stage and eventual projected relay. It is of interest to me that Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins label this frame as ‘an exercise in negativity’, reinforcing the apparent handicap suffered from falsely striving for a perfect reproduction (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013: 16). Whilst I perceive the framework as a restrictive boundary, arguably demeaning the value of latter adaptations, I also appreciate the sense of framing and attempt at marking the stages of representation. Throughout this chapter, I will inevitably address and contest the framework established by Wagner. Whilst not directly citing the stages described by Wagner, my analysis of Woolf and Mitchell’s work will utilize a framework, a chronology, in order to unravel the overlapping influences between the times of writing and adapting.

Expressing the notion of framing as a linear passage and echoing her sentiment of tracing the pathway between texts, Sanders writes, ‘In these phrases

the relationship is often viewed as linear and reductive; the appropriation is always in the secondary, belated position, and the discussion will therefore always be, to a certain extent, about difference, lack, or loss' (Sanders, 2006: 12). In establishing a relationship of linearity, there is a binary between the initial and secondary material according to Sanders. The adapted text is an example of the theoretical movement I will analyze: echoing my overall argument that contests and reconfigures the relationship between performance and documentation; rather than considering that the distance between representations marks a sense of loss as expressed by Sanders, I will argue in favour of the reforming of the material, as documentation performs as 'live' again. As Alberta-Crane and Cutchins highlight the positives in drawing texts away from initial stagings, and indeed Linda Hutcheon notes that 'an adaptation is a derivation without being derivative – a work that is second without being secondary' (Hutcheon, 2006: 9), I compare the positive movement between genres: in this chapter the reforming of novel to stage and cinematic-style relay.

In this chapter I will consider the idea of working from loss, and I will discuss Woolf's life, loss of life, and her experiences informing her work in both form and content. I will discuss Mitchell's experience as a director, reforming and reinterpreting a novel for a stage performance. In addition to the 'poststructuralist lens'<sup>53</sup> advocated by Alberta-Crane and Cutchins that will inform my writing, I will take heed of their thoughts on adapting between various genres. Alberta-Crane and Cutchins suggest: 'Adaptation studies ought to focus on the space of disjunction between texts and media to ask what that space, that necessary difference, enables' (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013:

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<sup>53</sup> 'As adaptation studies adopts a poststructuralist lens and defines this richer notion of intertextuality, some of its key assumptions will change' (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013: 19).

20). I will then consider the staging of *Waves*, analyzing closely the use of technology, which supports the notion that adapting and reforming opens a space of interpretation or a site of liveness between documents and performances. I will ultimately consider the role of technology in reforming the stage of the National Theatre and the altered perceptions of the beacon venue.

### *Reform*

Woolf's writing continued until her suicide: she suffered greatly with depression and eventually drowned herself. Three notes marked her suicide: one to her sister, Vanessa, and the other two, for her husband Leonard. The note to her sister, headed 'Sunday' predates the documented note of her husband's, headed Tuesday<sup>54</sup>. Woolf entered the River Ouse on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> March 1941. Her body was not discovered until several weeks later<sup>55</sup>. The path to death was lengthy and considered: drowning subsumes the body at various rates and stages whilst the discovery of the body delayed the finality of the last act. Having suffered with depression throughout her life, Woolf's battle was lost.

Woolf's biographer notes that she was 'unable to stop revising her work until the end'<sup>56</sup>. The revising, revisiting and reforming of her notes, demonstrates the perseverance of the writer. Woolf adapts her note for her two readers, coherent although she claims her confusion in writing, urging Vanessa that the fault of her death would not lie with Leonard, and reassuring Leonard of this within his own note. Documents such as Woolf's suicide notes, written several times over as adapted documents, lengthen the passage of her passing. The

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<sup>54</sup> See both *Openculture*, 2016, (accessed: 19/08/16) and *The Virginia Woolf Blog*, 2016, (accessed: 19/08/16).

<sup>55</sup> *Googlebooks*, 2016, (accessed: 02/09/15).

<sup>56</sup> *The Guardian*, 2003, (accessed: 22/08/15).

renewed state of the notes, with the intention of pronouncing an end, enables metaphorically, another attempt at living; Leonard's notes (plural) rather than note (singular), brings with their inception a chance of repetition: a second try at life, a dissuading of death. Woolf's biographical outputs, borne directly from her own writings in diaries and novels, extend her metaphorical life further still. *Mrs Dalloway*, a 1925 novel by Woolf, was adapted into a text *The Hours* (1999), written by Michael Cunningham, before being adapted or reformed for the screen four years later. *The Hours* considers the lives of three different women, including Woolf, in three different time settings, transposed from England to America, as they struggle with life and the allure of death<sup>57</sup>. As if to continue writing Woolf's last diary, held within her archives with blank pages following her final entry, her life has been subsequently adapted and reformed.

The notion of the 'original' or 'source' becomes problematic within adaptation studies, as with the example of *The Hours* (2003). In contestation with the notion of adaptation in promoting the movement of ideas between sources, the concept of the 'authentic original' prevents the forward movement of the field in terms of theory or practice (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013: 12). In addition to diminishing the quality of later interpretations as *inauthentic*, the concept ignores the sources that contributed to the apparent authentic output. The concept of adaptation, where one text is altered to create anew, I suggest, is predicated upon a cycling of ideas. The 'source' or 'original' is necessary as a marker but impractical and theoretically improbable when tracing the path of influence, as with *The Hours* where Woolf's novel and life impact upon Cunningham's and latterly David Hare's retelling. Whilst Woolf's work and life

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<sup>57</sup> *The Guardian*, 2003, (accessed: 22/08/15).

were influential for Hare, his screenplay was adapted from Cunningham's novel specifically. The 'origin' or 'source' text is therefore difficult to determine, as paths of influences were drawn from both Woolf and Cunningham. Moreover, Sanders notes that:

...consumption need not always be the intended endpoint of adaptation; the adapting text does not necessarily seek to consume or effect the informing source ... it is the very endurance and survival of the source text that enables the ongoing process of juxtaposed readings that are crucial to the cultural operations of adaptation, and the ongoing experiences of pleasure for the reader or spectator in tracing the intertextual relationships (Sanders, 2006: 25).

As I concern myself with the notion of intertextuality in chapter three, I will here focus upon Sanders's negotiation between 'source' and 'endpoint' (Sanders, 2006: 25). In suggesting that the adapted version of a text need not be its end or expiration, Sanders enables a link to be forged between the reformed text and its influences, or 'source'. Building on Sanders's argument, I want to suggest that the end is indeed another 'source' in itself; or specifically that documentation reforms material therefore inspiring further creations from the apparent 'end' of an output. For example, the adaptation of Woolf's text, *The Hours*, displayed a reformed version of her writing, as well as a retelling of her life. As Sanders notes, the 'experiences of pleasure for the reader' occur when making comparisons between the various paths of influence that formed Cunningham's work (Sanders, 2006: 25). To assert that *The Hours* was an 'endpoint' dismisses

the possibility of further adaptations (Sanders, 2006: 25); indeed Hare's screenplay, formed into a successful film by director Stephen Daldry, reformed the novel by Cunningham. Whilst Woolf's life ended with her suicide, it is her tenacious writing and subsequent reforming of her work and life that informs further outputs, as discussed in the following section.

### *Radio play*

Woolf's novel guides the reader through various times and places, creating a chronological pathway to navigate an otherwise ambiguous text. The reader is moved from upbringing to school, university and beyond through the monologues or "dramatic soliloquies" of the six central characters, intersecting to form the overall narrative for the reader (Woolf, 2000: ix). The decision to write from multiple viewpoints, demonstrates Woolf's choice to make 'an implicit denial, through her method of writing the novel, that the perceiving mind – the mind of the writer – operates in any consistent way' (Woolf, 2000: xxv). Given her mental instability, where Woolf confesses to hearing voices in her suicide note to Leonard, there is an apparent influence between her thoughts and the form of her work. The content of *The Waves* is influenced by the life of Woolf, by demonstrating not only the presence of multiple, influential voices, but also the absence of significant voices. The seventh character of the novel, Percival, is described through the other characters, a trait that continues after his early death, a riding accident. Thoby, Woolf's own beloved brother, died at a young age. The absence of Percival after his death, but the significance of his presence throughout, emphasizes Woolf's sense of loss<sup>58</sup>. Scholar Kate Flint

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<sup>58</sup> National Theatre Education, 2006, (accessed: 28/08/15).



suggests that the operation of writing in a such a way, echoing the tangled web of thoughts inevitably conceived by Woolf during this period, illustrates her own sense of cycling and self-referentiality; the repeated motifs displayed throughout the novel flow as if on waves themselves (Woolf, 2000: xi). Whilst not an autobiographical text, the movement between the influences of Woolf and the experiences of the six central characters underlines the adapted version of Woolf's life, presented in her novel.

Attempting to reform *The Waves* for stage proved difficult for Mitchell: the monologues consist of thoughts rather than direct narrative, ill fitting for the proposed medium of theatre where the subconscious is less easily displayed for an audience than explicit speech or actions. The various times and settings of the text would make any translation to the stage troublesome<sup>59</sup>. As moving across genres would involve adapting both content and style, adapting the novel to a potentially unrecognizable state, in an attempt to focus the adaptation, Mitchell reformed the novel into a script:

The 40 page document incorporated material from most of the chapters, favouring some like the early primary school experiences and middle age, more than others ... I also knew that the two dinners would be the main events of the production. Each section of the 40 page document had a simple title and an approximate date reflecting the book narrative. In each section I favoured more concrete text that was better for speaking than for reading. There are sections that are very slow, contemplative, with very long sentences, that would not really work theatrically and these were cut.

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<sup>59</sup> National Theatre Education, 2006, (accessed: 28/08/15).

The passages with shorter, punchier sentences, crammed with colour and metaphor, were selected (Rebellato, 220: 2014).

Mitchell's choices regarding the script mirrored the concerns of the novel whilst mirroring the concerns of the stage. By focusing on certain time periods, the narrative becomes more manageable. A title and date of scenes enables an audience to follow the chronology of the play, thereby the passage of childhood to adulthood traced in the novel. Mitchell's focus on more concise passages creates a more succinct performance, whilst her consideration of colour and imagery are akin with the passages of description in the novel. Mitchell had made several attempts to structure Woolf's novel however, confessing that 'It was always tricky to find a performance mode that was true to its inchoate form' (Rebellato, 218: 2014). As Sanders considers that adaptation need not be the 'endpoint' of the 'source' text (Sanders, 2006: 25), Mitchell's assertion that Woolf's text was still forming troubles received ideas about the process of adapting. Returning to Flint's idea that the motifs of the novel move as if on waves, altering a text that cycles, ebbs and flows evidently disrupts the path of adaptation. Whilst I argued against the strict categorization of Wagner in his assertion of three levels of adaptation, the process of structuring enables a framework upon which to theorize: from an initial output to a reformed output. Mitchell's supposition that the 'source' text is 'inchoate' (Rebellato, 218: 2014), unformed or rather not fully formed renders any adaptation of the 'source' text as premature, altering the path of adaptation framed by Wagner. In attempting to adapt an arguably incomplete and cycling text, the structure or framework asserted by Wagner requires remodeling. The linear path inferred that depicts

outputs according to their relationship can instead, I suggest, be imagined as a cyclical path, where influences and ideas are moved between texts. In addition to reconfiguring the adapted text beyond secondary or ‘endpoint’, the initial output can arguably still develop in this cyclical scenario envisaged; thereby accounting for experimental or innovative ways of working that existing linear theories of documentation omit. Despite being equipped with her latest script of reformed thoughts, Mitchell admitted that, ‘When we started rehearsals in London I didn’t have a clue about how we were going to do the show ... ‘ (Rebellato, 219: 2014)

Navigating Woolf’s multilayered text was eventually solved through Mitchell’s experimentation with ‘fast-moving thoughts’<sup>60</sup>. Woolf’s text combines the internal feelings and thoughts of six characters, reflecting her own mind and its mixed workings. Translating these various thoughts would enable a rich tapestry of ideas for an audience. Mitchell’s initial direction to her company was to discover how thoughts are processed and ‘manifest’ in the mind. This involved asking the actors to represent how thoughts move through their head as well as using basic props scattered in the rehearsal room to ‘animate’ these thoughts and processes<sup>61</sup>. Dan Rebellato, who has interviewed Mitchell throughout her career, notes on this method of working:

Initially, Mitchell’s plan was to stage it [*Waves*] as a radio play, with the characters’ voices amplified and supported by the usual apparatus of radio drama, gravel pits to simulate walking, spot effects and soundtracks

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<sup>60</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>61</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

to create aural atmospheres for the voices to inhabit. Indeed, this was the form of the first third of the production ...<sup>62</sup>

In attempting to track thoughts of various characters simultaneously, Mitchell had sought the use of mixed apparatus, such as gravel pits, to externalize and exemplify: the genre of radio play was used as a negotiation between thoughts and movement.

The elements eventually used within the radio play set up were inspired largely by the Foley training that the actors received during rehearsals. Foley actors, who enhance sound effects onstage, were adopted as role names by Mitchell: in addition to an actor portraying a character from Woolf's novel, each actor would also be responsible for setting scenes throughout the performance, effectively working as backstage crew in aiding the use of technology onstage. Speaking on the final stage of development, Rebellato notes that 'soon these sonic interpretations were complemented by visual representations'<sup>63</sup>. From the 'very primitive'<sup>64</sup> cameras that were in the rehearsal room, the Foley actors became responsible for setting and shooting scenes that were in turn fed into a live feed, shown in real time and displayed via a projector above the stage at the National Theatre. Mitchell concludes:

The delivery of the text needed to have the speed and lightness of a thought as you experience it in your head ... The main aim in rehearsals was to get our theatre production as close to the novel's stream of consciousness as we could. We soon realised that the only way to do this

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<sup>62</sup> *Myilibrary*, 2013, (accessed: 16/06/16).

<sup>63</sup> *Myilibrary*, 2013, (accessed: 16/06/16).

<sup>64</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

was to get close inside each character's head. This is where the video came in as it allows us to get very close to each character's face, so close that the audience could see a thought flicker behind an eye or a tiny movement of one of the 200 muscles on the face. We used the cameras to get close to these tiny details and then we added the text as a whispered quicksilver into the microphones to simulate thoughts (Rebellato, 219: 2014).

This chapter will analyze scenes from *Waves* that used video to effectively portray Woolf's text and characters onstage. However, my concern here is the evolution of the performance; the progression from text and radio play to video relay and the theoretical impact of these adaptations. The assumed linear relationship between performance and documentation can be perceived as a cyclical relationship, so that the path between the two reflects an interwoven set of influences. The life of a performance, reformed through documentation, breeds performance anew, as the documentation may be seen as 'live'. Adaptation, I propose, creates a cycling relationship between Woolf's work and Mitchell's media. The transfer of novel into script involved highlighting moments of punctuation within the text that demonstrated the journey of the characters for an audience. As Mitchell notes, the text that was used in the production was a 'whispered quicksilver' (Rebellato, 219: 2014), moving from Woolf through her characters to the audience, via Mitchell and the company. Woolf's self-reflective and arguably documentary insight is given new life via this initial adaptation. In terms of form, the radio play set up described by Rebellato enabled a visual, concrete method of depicting abstracted thoughts,

enhanced further still by the use of ‘primitive’ video in the rehearsal room (Rebellato, 219: 2014). Whilst the use of video developed through the rehearsal process, the use of the radio props remained, working as a document of a previous attempt; a trace of a prior ‘performance’. Left onstage throughout the production, the detritus of this development informed not only the rehearsal stage but moreover the performance onstage at the National Theatre. Likewise the use of the Foley artist, proven as inspiration to Mitchell and the company at the beginning stages of the rehearsal process, altered the logic of the production and mode of play. The Foley artists, working to enhance sound as well as visuals, facilitated in the operation of the live feed; delivering projected footage of the actors in close up.

As later analysis of scenes will engage the relationship between performance and documentation regarding the use of live feed as well as Foley actors and radio props more fully, I will conclude in highlighting the adaptation of forms. Mitchell’s intention in adapting the thoughts of Woolf transferred both literally, in terms of the passages from the text read throughout, and metaphorically in highlighting the meeting of various thoughts, demonstrated in the novel by the intersection of character and monologues and in the performance through the *reforming* of performance mode. *Waves* not only adapted Woolf’s writing, but moreover formed a new mode of theatre, for Mitchell, reformed from a conceptualization based upon text and radio. As *Waves* can be seen as a reformed document of *The Waves*, so the performance can also be viewed as documentation of Mitchell’s working process. The multiplicity of forms displayed via Mitchell’s use of media extends the movement and various stimuli in Woolf’s text. Mirroring the thinking of Woolf,

the layered, adapted and reformed delivery of *Waves* both documents and performs *The Waves* anew.

### *Video relay*

Described as a very slow process, *Waves* was conceived, lit, marked, cued and constructed with painstaking detail, in an attempt to reconstruct the world as perceived by Virginia Woolf<sup>65</sup>. Mitchell's sense of play becomes increasingly complicated throughout the production, as more shots are set in quick succession, making it incredibly hard and impractical to source the labour of each Foley actor in terms of their camerawork and contributions to the running of the production. In this section I will describe the process involved in a specific set of scenes in order to analyze their making, but moreover to highlight their relevance with regards to performance and documentation.

The title sequences, which appear in total seven times throughout the production, establish a version of a linear, rather than chronological time; guiding the audience through the passages of the novel onstage. Emphasizing these sections of time for an audience, Mitchell and the company titled each of the seven significant sections that they portray onstage marking important events such as starting school or university, creating literal signposts for an audience to follow in the performance<sup>66</sup>. The management of these 'sign postings', repeated in the same fashion throughout, involves three Foley actors, though in reality the shot exists as one or two chalked words on a board. One actor is responsible for the literal writing in front of the live camera; thus in real time an audience can

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<sup>65</sup> *The Guardian*, 2006, (accessed: 30/8/2015).

<sup>66</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

see the writing of the Foley, synced exactly with the emergence of the title on the projected screen above the stage. Stage left, writing on another, larger chalkboard, is a second Foley actor, who enthusiastically chucks in time with the writing of the first actor. The use of the chalk is separated in this situation to enable clearer relay in terms of sound, and to emphasize the effect that would be otherwise absorbed by the various bodies in the auditorium. Once the title has been held for a few seconds, the first actor uses a board rubber to erase the chalk, leaving smudged detritus on the surface, to be written over in the later scenes with other postings. A third Foley actor, stage right, is required to make the erasing sounds, rubbing aggressively, again, in time to the rubbing of the first actor, synced naturally, with the projected image overhead. An audience, watching the action unravel, is as disjointed in their perception of the scene as the actors onstage contributing to the effect, as one actor's work is effectively tripled in terms of output. Three Foleys are required to produce only seconds of live footage. This footage may be watched by an audience, in isolation on the projected screen. However, if an audience member is following the action below the screen, which combines to create the shot, there is an inevitable confusion in understanding its development and ultimately isolating the effect, in order to reconstruct the jigsaw pieces and make sense of scene as a whole.

The tussling between deconstruction and reconstruction presented by the work of the Foleys likens their activity to the pursuit of adaptation<sup>67</sup>. In adapting a text, a relationship is established between the 'source' text and its adapted version. The 'source' provides inspiration and influence, emanating meaning to provide a stimulus. These influences are then reconstructed to reform the

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<sup>67</sup> My use of deconstruction and reconstruction here relates specifically to assembly, rather than inferring a Derridean, post-structuralist reading of Mitchell's direction.



‘source’ text and provide the adapted version. The work of the Foleys in stripping bare the essentials or staging in performance, mirror the individual elements and inspiration of the ‘source’ text; in this situation physicalizing to an audience life events as identified in *The Waves*. The reconstruction occurs via a sum of parts, as three Foley actors are required to revise these elements before their replaying on the projected screen above the stage. Significantly however, the use of media enables simultaneity between the states of deconstruction and reconstruction, forming or reforming, in this example. Working as a mediating device, the Foleys setting and shooting of the scene allow an audience to witness the separated elements as well as the overall result, relayed via the live feed. Subverting the passage between the hypothetical ‘source’ text and the adapted text, the use of the live feed mediates between the Foleys and the overhead relay, also negotiating between the forming and reforming of material.

Unlike the text where a ‘source’ is adapted subsequent to revision, the use of media enables immediacy due to this *live* movement. Tracing the path of influence becomes practically problematic due to the work of the various Foley artists onstage, but also theoretically problematic as the established binary between performance and documentation is subverted due to simultaneity that prevents a linear path assumed of the states. Whilst the result of the Foley’s work is documented above the stage, the media enables this to occur via a *live* feed, changing the perspective on the overall performance: moving between live ‘performance’ and live recorded ‘documentation’. The theoretical movement between these two states is what I am referring to as an area of ‘unmarked liveness’: labelling in this example the zone of transition between the live performance, the breaking down of the script enacted by the Foleys onstage, and

the recorded result, a documented reconstruction of the Foley's recorded work, enabled via the *live* feed. The repetition of the sequences further disrupts the assumed binary between performance and documentation, as each new sequence feels a revision of the past scene or an adapted version of the initial idea. The titles sequences work as a document of a performance, whilst also part of the performance itself.

I argue that several elements of *Waves* move between the states of 'performance' and 'documentation', such as detritus from the rehearsals, including props and scripts, which appeared onstage at the National Theatre. The company devised scenes using the basic props, created during the rehearsal period along with Mitchell, filling the National's rehearsal space. As the evolution from radio to video occurred, so the props became vital stimulus for the original creation during rehearsals and subsequent recreation of the scenes during the production run. The props moved from the rehearsal room to the theatre, lining stage left and right, anchoring the performances. Similarly, the bibles created by each actor instructing them on their precise movements throughout the production were moved from the rehearsals to the performances. Whereas scripts and notes from the rehearsal room are usually learnt and/or recited to an audience, Mitchell's actors relied upon these books containing the drawings, maps or 'blueprints' of camera angles and cue lines in order to navigate their personal plan of the performance<sup>68</sup>. Although literally documenting the rehearsal process, the documents also became vital parts of the performances, arguably performing alongside the actors as they worked to ensure

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<sup>68</sup> Jack Boozer notes that adapted screenplays for films are rarely seen beyond the archive, and refers to these texts as 'skeletal blueprints' (Boozer, 2008: 2). I consider that the notes and markings of Mitchell's actors from the rehearsal period work similarly to the adaptation of screenplays, with the bibles or blueprints mapping the configuration of filming onstage.

a successful run. The use of the bibles onstage, seen on the props table to prompt the actors as well as in rehearsal, alters the binary between ‘performance’ and ‘document’<sup>69</sup>: the performances practiced and documented during the rehearsal period are as much performed onstage as documented onstage, showing effectively the latest version of the rehearsal process to an audience<sup>70</sup>. One scene within *Waves*, integral to Mitchell’s forty page revised script and involving highly precise camera work, utilizes the recorded opportunities offered by live streaming in the creation of ‘photographs’ on screen. The scene, depicting a dinner of the characters in London, cleverly enables all the friends to be sitting around a dining table by initially adjusting the perspective of the cameras in relation to the stage and audience. The Foley actors set the cameras at forty-five degree angles to the left and right of the stage, capturing the tables that spread across the front of the stage in an angled, split screen projection. Initially, only two characters sit at each of the tables, one stage left and one stage right, projected in reverse on the screen above stage. As the third and fourth members are welcomed to the dinner, an actor pours wine into the glasses of the four around the table. One arm in front of each table of actors summons the illusion on the screen of one waiter, pouring wine into each of the member’s glasses around the single central table (Mitchell, 2008: 54). As the fifth and sixth characters enter, so the audience can see onstage three characters, sitting at each table, front on, appearing simultaneously above the stage on the projector screen as six friends, sitting around a squared table. The illusion is maintained with the

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<sup>69</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>70</sup> Chapter three addresses more fully the relationship between ...*Some trace of her* and *Waves*, with the productions, I argue, demonstrating a development of form and method with regards to Mitchell’s media outputs. Chapter three also highlights Mitchell’s concerns in feeling that *Waves* was never completed.

soft hum of dinner sounds; metal condiments and glasses clinking to the background of murmuring voices, before movement ensues and narrative accompanies: ‘... we are silhouettes. We are hollow fountains moving mistily without a background’<sup>71</sup>. Woolf’s words complement the scene as the scene furthers the meanings portrayed in the words: the images of the actors, represented as two-dimensional distant figures on the projector screen, document the narrative in echoing the idea of emptiness and hollowed bodies.

Whilst, I want to argue, the scene within the performance effectively documents Woolf’s text, it moreover enhances the idea of mixed identity through the muddle of bodies onstage and on screen, highlighted by the use of pretence and illusion from crafting the dinner<sup>72</sup>. The ‘photographs’, taken around the dinner table towards the end of the scene, capture the movement between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’. As several characters huddle in front of one of the cameras, a sound effect is made that leads the audience to recall the booming of older cameras snapping; simultaneously, the projected image onstage freezes and turns from colour to a harsh blue. The image on the screen above the stage for the first time during the production remains frozen and still, held momentarily. This halt in action provides some uncertainty about the nature of the screened material; the held ‘photograph’ is imprinted on the eyes as the narrative overlaid announces, ‘Do not move. Do not go. Hold it forever’<sup>73</sup> before the live feed, projected in real time, plays once again. These ‘photographs’, willed in the narrative to stay and create a sense of permanency thereby adapting

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<sup>71</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>72</sup> Echoing Woolf’s novel that intentionally plays with form to create a merging of monologues and senses, I consider that Mitchell’s pre-occupation with the idea of mixed identities reinforced this reformed method of displaying, thus staging, work. Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>73</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

the use of the live stream that facilitates instant relay, juxtapose the states of performance and documentation. In his consideration of the performativity of performance documentation, Philip Auslander summarizes performance documentation as either ‘documentary’ or ‘theatrical’ in nature (Auslander, 2006: 1)<sup>74</sup>. ‘Documentary’ examples follow the assumed linear relationship between performance and documentation whereby the performance precedes the documentation and the resultant photographs evidence the performance as proof of existence. By contrast, the ‘theatrical’ category is defined as:

... cases in which performances were staged solely to be photographed or filmed and had no meaningful prior existence as autonomous events presented to audiences. The space of the document (whether visual or audiovisual) thus becomes the only space in which the performance occurs (Auslander, 2006: 2).

Auslander’s ‘theatrical’ category prioritizes the document by placing the autonomy of the overall ‘performance’ within its remit. Describing that the source had ‘no meaningful prior existence’ (Auslander, 2006: 2), the evidence or result is considered as the point of departure artistically; thus the performance is borne from this theatrical documentation. In this way, the linear relationship between performance and documentation is subverted, as the documentation effectively precedes the performance.

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<sup>74</sup> I am aware that Auslander’s arguments here are specific to performance documentation, rather than performance and documentation, as has been my preoccupation throughout this chapter. However, the example of freezing or photographing a live stream is in accord with the ideas and analysis of performance documentation as detailed by Auslander. In highlighting and arguing against the restrictive two categories of performance documentation, citing Mitchell’s media as my examples, I aim to question further the assumed binary relationship between performance and documentation.

Whilst Auslander continues to argue that the ontological distinctions regarding performance and documentation are essentially ideological, the photographs borne from Mitchell's live feed prove his categories of performance documentation as too limiting. Although the work of the Foleys in setting, lighting and preparing the cameras must ensue in order to stream the action projected above stage, the shooting itself occurs alongside the live streaming. The linear path between performance and documentation detailed by Auslander that defines the nature of the 'documentary' category cannot be traced due to the simultaneity of physical and digital bodies. Regarding the 'theatrical' category, whilst the space of the document is arguably the projected screen above the stage, the performance space encompasses the Foley actors working below on the same element of the production.

The notion that the work of the Foleys 'had no meaningful prior existence' (Auslander, 2006: 2), in addition to the simultaneous movement highlighted that counters the idea of prior existence, can also be contested on the grounds of its meaningful output. Mitchell's initial proposal to direct Woolf's text as a quasi radio play included the use of props onstage to be manipulated in sight of the audience. The deconstructed elements of the performance, reconstructed in the projected images, mark the output as 'really, deeply honest'<sup>75</sup> in laying bare the bones of theatre, thus highly meaningful and essential to the making of the performance. Although instructive, the categories of performance documentation described by Auslander are inconclusive in the example of Mitchell's media. The intervention of freezing live streaming through the making of photographs, and yet the intersection of these photographs within a

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<sup>75</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

constant live feed, subverts the theoretical or ontological state of the output; as the display blurs the boundaries between the states of performance and documentation. As the freezing process delays the live feed, the photographs are arguably resultant or secondary, marking them as ‘documentary’ according to Auslander. Whilst I agree that the ability to record the stream determines it as a site of documentation, the screen hangs above the Foleys, tracing their work and movements, thus blurring the distinction between documenting a process *onscreen* and performing a process *onstage*: the screened documentation could be argued as performance. Further confusing the definition of Mitchell’s media, the Foleys reform the initial photograph producing a series of five shots during the dinner scene; collectively summarized in the narrative as ‘quicksilver’<sup>76</sup>. Quicksilver or mercury, moves between states and is commonly used as a liquid, previously manipulated in early photographic development processes. Reinforcing my notion of sublimation as an analogy to represent the movement between the states of performance and documentation, I argue the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ theoretically enables this oscillation, metaphorically standing between the two states. As with the movement of mercury to quicksilver that enabled the processing of photographs, the ‘unmarked liveness’ maintains the live element on the projected screen despite the arguable ‘documented’ state of the frozen image.

The use of the live stream onstage enabled not only a merging of mediums between text, photography and digital performance, but also enhanced the adapted roles of the actors. Mitchell’s actors, in addition to portraying the characters of Woolf’s text, interchange with their role as Foleys actors, working

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<sup>76</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

with cameras to record action for the live-streamed projector overhead.

Developed during the radio play section of the rehearsal process, the company alternate between aiding and participating in the shots to be screened. The doubled role of the actors as either characters or Foleys I consider to emphasize the aims of Woolf in her preoccupation with a disturbed sense of self. The various characters narrating their experiences echoes this sentiment, as Mitchell effectively doubled the bodies onstage for an audience in terms of roles and commitments<sup>77</sup>. ‘Identity failed me’, narrated to the audience, reflects not only the sentiments of Woolf and her text, but also the actors who reference the screen avidly throughout the performance<sup>78</sup>. The Foley actors refer to the screen, adapting the physical body onstage and surrounds as needed, to ensure the quality of the digital body, projected above. Whilst subject of the shot, the actors cannot refer to the screen, though the awareness of the cameras, and thus the live feed, is unavoidable. The uncanny sense of doubling experienced by the actors is transferred to the audience as they experience the meeting of the physical and digital body<sup>79</sup>, additional to the meeting of the actors as both Foleys and characters interchangeably. Echoing Woolf’s instabilities further, feelings of the uncanny develop as the audience witness absence in a presence. The character of Percival is integral to the performance, presenting the feelings of other characters, though he remains silent with his character absent of narration. After

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<sup>77</sup> Mitchell discussed in a private interview the schools of thought surrounding the development of personality. Her view that experiences can alter personalities I believe manifested in *Waves* through her doubled actors, working as both characters and Foley artists, displaying a splitting of a body and an imbalanced sense of self to the audience. Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>78</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) *Waves*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>79</sup> Matthew Causey writes on the uncanny doubling of bodies as a result of media in performance (Causey, 2006: 24). Whilst the actors in *Waves* cannot directly witness themselves as performers in that they cannot see themselves being live-streamed, the uncanny experience is inevitable due to the closeness with which they relate to the stream onstage, as well as their awareness of its workings when operating the cameras as Foley actors.



his death, his absence is highlighted via his presence, with the photographs previously taken being recalled as though the friends are searching an old album. As the audience reminisces and acknowledges the photograph on the projector, and as each character mourns his death individually, the actor who portrayed Percival works onstage. Despite the physical presence onstage, nonsensically in citing a previous moment from the performance the recalled photograph creates a feeling of absence and loss. There is an estrangement between the physical bodies onstage, acting as Foleys rather than posing as characters in the photograph, in contestation with the re-presented digital bodies on screen. Creating a multiplicity of bodies, the use of technology alters the roles of the actors in causing juxtaposition between the physical and digital, presence and absence.

Adaptation involves reforming: reforming the language, style and application of a 'source', material or text to conceive it anew. Mitchell's adaptation of *The Waves* moved from novel to reformed writing, from radio play to video relay, altering across genres. The performance shown at the National Theatre was hybridized, reflecting the various genres through the application of technology, specifically the use of live streaming. Enabling a reforming of the novel, the relay of a radio-style set up successfully related the various concerns of the central characters simultaneously. As Alberta-Crane and Cutchins consider that, 'Adaptation studies ought to focus on the space of disjunction between texts and media to ask what that space, that necessary difference, enables' (Albrecht-Crane and Cutchins, 2013: 20), *Waves* enabled a reforming of the 'source' text via Mitchell's inclusion of media. As Mitchell has expressed that the initial

rehearsals saw the company searching for the *language* of the performance<sup>80</sup>, Sanders considers with regards to adaptation and the digital age, that ‘there is a need to establish a more diverse vocabulary for discussing and describing the relationship between texts’ (Sanders, 2006: 12). Sanders’s discussion develops to discuss the relationship between texts and hypertexts, linked digitally by their citations and palimpsestic qualities. As if creating a hypertext within her work, Mitchell’s use of media cites various genres, inspirations and ‘sources’ to create an adapted language of performance that I argue tussles between performing and documenting.

Mitchell is highly aware of the pressures of working and remaining competitive in the performance world<sup>81</sup>. At forty, *Waves* was the breakthrough required; Mitchell openly acknowledges that the production altered her career, and that she persuaded the then head of the National Theatre Nicholas Hytner to allow her to experiment on the project<sup>82</sup>. As Rebellato notes that, ‘It was a stunning departure for Mitchell’, he moreover asserts that the move was a ‘fairly remarkable production for the NT’, a production ‘one expects to see in a venue associated with performance art, not so much England’s national theatre company’<sup>83</sup>. Mitchell’s adeptness at adapting created not only a landmark piece

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<sup>80</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>81</sup> In a lengthy discussion into the longevity of theatre makers, Mitchell spent time reflecting upon the necessity of marketing oneself as a maker, in order to remain active. The group was asked to construct a list of influential and active directors over the age of fifty, which was considerably shortened with Mitchell’s knowledge. The added thought of female only directors provided a true insight into Mitchell’s world. Her openness to projects and her time spent as a business worker, marketing and forging new projects, are pushed in an effort to remain employed. Her adaptability in directing classical, opera and multimedia work, though not the focus of this thesis, is referenced in some detail in chapter five. Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

<sup>82</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>83</sup> *Myilibrary*, 2013, (accessed: 16/06/16).

of performance at an established, beacon venue, but also documented her reformed image as a director thereafter.

## RECONSTRUCT

### REWRITE: The Habit of Art

Playwright Alan Bennett has stressed that he was given an unmanageable array of notes after submitting his second draft of *The Habit of Art* (2010) (Bennett, 2013: 431). He said he felt inundated and he was also unwell, spending a period in hospital recovering, meaning that rewriting was postponed (Bennett, 2016: 431). Delaying the production by a year ultimately proved useful. As Bennett rewrote the script, Nicholas Hytner, director of the production and former director of the National Theatre, restructured the play season. After a successful pilot screening in 2009, *The Habit of Art* was to be live-streamed as part of the first NT Live ‘season’ in 2010. Although Bennett concedes that no adaptations were required between stage and screen<sup>84</sup>, the process of rewriting that delayed the premier of *The Habit of Art* resulted in reconstructions that altered both the effect and impact of the performance, and the habit of presenting art, through digital means, at the National Theatre thereafter.

Working through omissions, as with editing material, is repeatedly part of a writing process or a habit influencing Bennett’s art<sup>85</sup>. When diagnosed with cancer in 1997, Bennett began to amass his collection of diary entries to form an autobiography of his career, *Untold Stories* (2005). Bennett used his entries to influence writing that was considered ‘tidying up’; ‘I could write what I wanted

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<sup>84</sup> Personal correspondence, Bennett, A., 17/02/17. On a card in response to my letter, asking about NT Live and querying any alterations between stage and screen writing, Bennett replied: ‘I don’t have any special thoughts about NT Live nor did I make any adjustments in *The Habit of Art*’.

<sup>85</sup> ‘I have always written too much and one of the reasons why my collaboration with Nicholas Hytner has been so long and fruitful is that he is among other things a ruthless surgeon with no hesitation about wielding the scissors or pressing whatever key it is on the computer’ (Bennett, 2016: xii).

and leave the question of publication to my executors' (Bennett, 2005: x).

Despite his preparedness, Bennett had apparently exited too early: surviving his battle resulting in his reconstructing of the work as 'pre-posthumous' (Bennett, 2005: xii).

*The Habit of Art*, described in Bennett's second autobiography *Keeping On Keeping On* (2016), is likewise concerned with posthumous, or 'pre-posthumous' writing. The production envisages a hypothetical meeting between W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten, who enjoyed several years of joint success as poet and composer before their relationship soured<sup>86</sup>. I am interested in Bennett's process of writing and rewriting of the artistic partnership that was enabled through a reconstruction of history. I examine the process of writing and working from edits, and unspoken conversations, that document despite their omitted nature. I finally consider the history of the National Theatre, rewritten and reconstructed by the inception of NT Live.

The works of several theorists have influenced the passage of this chapter. As a professor of performance writing, John Hall's notion of 'live writing' is of interest in opening a dialogue between writing as documentation and writing as performance. He notes that the

written is notionally not ephemeral: that is the point. But the act themselves of reading and writing are live, and without those acts the written is no more than archived potential for renewed liveness. The notion of *live writing* remains a productive and exemplary problematic [original emphasis] (Hall, 2013: 48).

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<sup>86</sup> *The Guardian*, 2009, (accessed: 02/05/15).

Hall's identifying of the 'live' within writing contrasts with the notion that documents are 'not ephemeral' (Hall, 2013: 48). As Hall considers the act of writing and reading as 'live', the document, written or read, carries the sense of liveness, described as the 'archived potential for renewed liveness' (Hall, 2013: 48). Hall, in citing the potential for liveness in both the act and archive, creates a new theoretical relationship between performance and documentation. I consider the process of writing *as* performance, demonstrated within *The Habit of Art*, where biographical material used by Bennett throughout the play lends a narrative; itself documented anew through the National Theatre's staging of the play. I challenge contemporary performance scholar John Freeman's viewpoint that; 'Where performance is always in the moment, critique is always in the past, so that documentation is only ever a surrogate' (Freeman, 2007: 11), theoretically questioning the notion of linearity inferred, whereby performance and documentation are limited to time and order. Instead I conclude that writing such as Bennett's *The Habit of Art* contains an 'unmarked liveness', highlighting potential live elements akin to Hall's assertion of a renewed liveness, which oscillates between performance and documentation.

I base my position upon the mutual relationship between performance and documentation through a poststructuralist lens, influenced by philosopher and literary theorist Jacques Derrida. In his last chapter of *Writing and Difference* (2001), 'Ellipsis', Derrida discusses Edmond Jabès's *The Book of Questions*, offering thoughts on the various volumes. Derrida's interest in the 'original' becomes a through line, relevant to the thesis in that a rewriting, or rereading, supposedly reconstructs thoughts. He notes that:

It is not absence of presence, but a trace which replaces a presence which has never been present, an origin by means of which nothing has begun. Now, the book has lived on this lure: to have given us to believe that passion, having originally been impassioned by *something*, could in the end be appeased by the return of that something. Lure of the origin, the end, the line, the ring, the volume, the center [original emphasis] (Derrida, 2001: 372).

Derrida creates a theoretical relationship between an original passion, outpouring or work and a represented work, or ‘the return of something’ (Derrida, 2001: 372). His description of the passage of thought *between* these two states of work is imagined as both linear and cyclical; emphasized by ‘the line’ as juxtaposed with ‘the ring’ (Derrida, 2001: 372). I parallel this analogy with my interpretation of the movement between performance and documentation, suggesting a passage but ultimately a cyclical relationship rather than linear between the two states. I term the ‘trace which replaces a presence which has never been present’ (Derrida, 2001: 372) as the ‘unmarked liveness’, relating to my analogy of sublimation where the liquid state is present but seamlessly moved through as a transition between solid to gas: a state that is live yet unmarked. I consider this zone to sit between performance and documentation, and throughout this chapter I will return to the idea of rewriting as a form of documenting performance, and a performance anew.

As within Derrida’s analysis of *The Book of Questions* that considers the passage of influence between volumes, I am interested in the relationship

between levels of representation detailed by Plato in Book X of *The Republic* (1993), *Poetry and Unreality*. In Book X, Socrates calls for the banishment of poetry and the arts from society, suggesting that their descriptive work is twice-removed from original work and therefore inferior. The three distinct levels established by Plato, discussed through Socrates, detail the work of the originator, the joiner and the painter. God, as originator, imagines concepts, created by the joiner, which are in turn represented by the painter. Further to my interest in Plato's writing, my interest with the levels of representation described form a comparison between the levels of performance and documentation within *The Habit of Art*. This chapter concludes with a reimagining of the levels or lives of NT Live, establishing a connection between technology and my sense that the imagined relationship between performance and documentation must change to accommodate new innovations.

In this chapter I study various examples of writing, joined in their nature as unspoken conversations. The conversation between 'Auden' and 'Britten' in *The Habit of Art* envisages reconciliation between the two artists, where in reality this did not occur. I consider biographical writing, as well as writing from documentary sources, analyzing the narrative and literary devices that enable a rewriting of the past, as exhibited by Bennett. The influence of Derrida will be further discussed in relation to a conference at which a dialogue between Derrida and fellow theorist Hans-Georg Gadamer was documented, although not spoken out loud; opening into a discussion on edits and cuts remaining live within writing despite their omission. I conclude with a reimagined and reconstructed vision of the processing of performances based on the hypothetical conversation between Socrates and his pupil, Glaucon; comparing Plato's analysis of



representation with the various production stages or ‘lives’ of performances exhibited at the National Theatre. I argue that the ‘lives’ identified are theoretically complicated by the addition of the NT Live project, which both ‘performs’ and ‘documents’ simultaneously.

### *Reconstruct*

According to Bennett, *The Habit of Art* proved difficult to write due to the pseudo-documentary nature of the play, which involved providing both fact and fiction to the audience. Bennett, in discussion with Hytner regarding many of his plays shown at the National Theatre, recalls ‘discussions on various drafts of ... script, for instance ...’ (Bennett, 2013: 431), that provide both inspiration and despair for the playwright. Bennett notes the troubles encountered writing the various drafts of *The Habit of Art*, recalling that: ‘whereas Nicholas Hytner had liked the first draft, he was less keen on the second, the script returned neatly annotated with remarks like ‘Do we need to know this?’, ‘Too much information’ and ‘Haven’t we had this already?’’ (Bennett, 2016: 431). Bennett, as if having to categorize the script into narrative and documentary material, decided that a device was needed to better frame the play; aiding understanding for both the audience and the director. He writes on his discovery:

... it occurred to me that the business of conveying the facts could be largely solved if a frame were put round the play by setting it in a rehearsal room. Queries about the text and any objections to it could then be put in the mouths of the actors who (along with the audience) could have their questions answered in the course of the rehearsal (Bennett,

2016: 431).

Bennett established a metatheatrical play within a play format to create his 'frame' (Bennett, 2016: 431) for the script. The play depicts a theatre group who are rehearsing in Rehearsal Room 2 at the National Theatre<sup>87</sup>. The group's play, 'Caliban's day', the title referencing the character within William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, presents a fictional meeting between 'Britten' and 'Auden' that hypothetically occurred shortly before Britten's last opera, *Death in Venice*. The theatre group, working on the final stages of rehearsing before opening, are led by a patient and sympathetic stage manager/director, compared with the stern and brusque playwright, who insists on attending rehearsals much to the dismay of the actors. Through the metatheatrical format, Hytner's queries on the text were answered, *rewritten* into the play itself:

There was an unexpected bonus to this that when, as happened on the next couple of drafts, Nicholas Hytner raised objections, these queries too, could just be passed on to the actors. 'Do we need this?' N.H. would write in the margin. And on the next draft he would find 'Do we need this?' (his own query) given to the actor. At one point he suggested cutting a pretty torturous section on Auden's (to me) impenetrable poem *The Sea and the Mirror*. We had a discussion about it and I duly cut it but then introduced the author as a character complaining about the cut. I found all this quite enjoyable, but it happened so often I began to feel the director almost deserved an author's credit' (Bennett, 2016: 431).

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<sup>87</sup> 'It [*The Habit of Art*] takes place in Rehearsal Room 2 in the National, the room reproduced so exactly by Bob Crowley that one had to keep reminding oneself this was not the real thing' (Bennett, 2016: 509).

Further to Bennett's rewriting of the script, his reconstruction of the play in making visible the practice of rewriting that is ordinarily hidden from an audience, enables a movement or shift in the imagined relationship between performance and documentation. The notes in the margins of the drafts, annotated by Hytner, work not only as prompts for Bennett, but also within the performance itself: rewritten as material for the fictional producer, playwright and actors. The reconstruction of this material in making visible the invisible rewriting, I argue, works as both documentation of the writing process within performance, as well as performance within writing in that Hytner's edits become material for the play. As with the omission of Auden's *The Sea and the Mirror*, removed by Hynter despite Bennett's wishes, the author's discussion of the cut resurrects the poem and its inclusion within *The Habit of Art*<sup>88</sup>. The reconstruction of the play in terms of framing enables a reimagining of the movement between performance and documentation, also creating diegetic 'levels' within the performance that juxtapose the writing of 'Caliban's Day' alongside *The Habit of Art*.

The inclusion of a biographer within 'Caliban's Day' worked as a further literary and dramatic device that aided the telling of history within the narrative. Bennett's text intertwines various diegetic levels of performance: the actors reciting their lines from the script of 'Caliban's day'; the actors speaking when

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<sup>88</sup> 'Auden' reflects on his poem, *The Sea and the Mirror*, written as an adjustment to *The Tempest*. 'It began with me thinking that the end of *The Tempest* really won't do. The injured are made whole, the guilty repent and it's all very neat, but I just felt there was more to be said'. *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15). The author of 'Caliban's Day' becomes irritated upon hearing that the poem has been cut, because the artistic relationship between rent-boy Stuart featured within *The Habit of Art*, and the vulgar Caliban from *The Tempest*, is lost: 'If you cut the poem, what happens at the end when Stuart, which is Caliban, comes into his own and addresses the audience?' The frustration of the author parallels an arguable frustration of Bennett when discussing the poem's inclusion within *The Habit of Art*.

out of role, rehearsing at the 'National'; and at a third stage of relay, the factual, biographical content, reflecting upon real lives of Britten and Auden. The facts are presented to the audience via the narrator, Humphrey Carpenter, throughout the script of 'Caliban's day'. 'Carpenter' assumes his real life role as biographer, interacting with both 'Britten' and 'Auden' to gather information for his publications on the composer and poet. Bennett notes in a lengthy passage that Carpenter was not originally to appear within *The Habit of Art*, although extensive use of his biographies as research material resulted in the inclusion of the biographer as a character; passing information to the audience effectively and efficiently. Bennett states that:

*The Habit of Art* was not easy to write, though its form is quite simple, because so much information had to be passed over to the audience about Auden and his life and about Britten and his and about their earlier association ... When I started writing the play I made much use of the biographies of both Auden and Britten written by Humphrey Carpenter and both are models of their kind. Indeed I was consulting his books so much that eventually Carpenter found his way into the play. His widow, Mari Prichard, was more than helpful over this, though feeling - and I'm sure rightly - that I hadn't done justice to him as a biographer or as a personality ... To have given him his proper due would have meant him taking over the play ... my only excuse being that he would have been the first to understand this and to be unsentimental about it. When he turned up on the stage he tended to hang about and act as a commentator, often speaking directly to the audience. This was useful as he could

explain points of fact and saved the main characters from telling each other stuff both of them knew already but the audience didn't (Bennett, 2016: 429).

Bennett notes 'Carpenter's' use as a device in working onstage within 'Caliban's Day', highlighting that beyond his role as character, his role as narrator facilitated understanding for the audience in relaying context. For example, establishing for the audience the path through which Auden has returned to Oxford, 'Carpenter' in a direct address notes that:

When Auden left his New York apartment for the last time someone in his building was practising 'Show Me the Way to Go Home' on the saxophone. An omen, one might think, but not really; as the Brewhouse is not home and never will be ... <sup>89</sup>.

The Brewhouse forms the set of 'Caliban's Day' and is therefore centre stage of 'Rehearsal Room 2', thus also centre stage for the audience in *The Habit of Art*. In addition to providing this historical insight into Auden's accommodation at Oxford, 'Carpenter', maintaining his direct address to the audience, continues that:

... It's a room that has never made it into literature and one on which its celebrated tenant never wasted any words. Still, poets give voice to the inarticulate universe so it should not seem strange if in the absence of the

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<sup>89</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

poet his furniture should take this opportunity to compare notes<sup>90</sup>.

I will soon analyze the personification or dramatic reconstruction of inanimate objects as useful devices through which to relay information to the audience, and here focus upon Donald, who performs the character of ‘Carpenter’ in ‘Caliban’s Day’. Donald resents his character’s metaphorical position within ‘Caliban’s Day’, asking in the rehearsal, ‘So where am I? Am I in the mind? ... Let’s decide this. I feel so *spare*’<sup>91</sup>. The author arguably speaking for Bennett in the address, justifies the use of ‘Carpenter’ to a disillusioned Donald, insisting that, ‘... being the author of a literary biography of Auden, and ten years or so after that a biography of Benjamin Britten, you [Donald acting as ‘Carpenter’] are in a unique position to give a commentary on their lives. You have become... the storyteller’<sup>92</sup>. Despite this assurance, Donald dejectedly concludes, ‘I just feel... I just feel I’m... *a device*’<sup>93</sup>, echoing Bennett’s humour as a playwright and self-awareness of the process of writing, laid bare for the audience through the framing of a play within a play. Bennett allows the author onstage to respond to Donald’s complaints; ‘Why does a play always have to be such a performance?’<sup>94</sup> possibly reflecting Bennett’s feelings towards the writing and rehearsing process.

The furniture in Auden’s accommodation at Oxford, Brewhouse, speak within ‘Caliban’s Day’, doubling as a satirical parody of theatre work, as well as providing the audience with further context on the poet. Ironically as two actors are away and not available to rehearse, the stage management team recites the

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<sup>90</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>91</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>92</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>93</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>94</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

poems written for Auden's mirror, chair, bed, door and clock. Fitz, who plays 'Auden' in 'Caliban's Day', questions the scene asking, 'Do we need the talking furniture? I know I'm old-fashioned, but why does the furniture talk? ... It's barmy'<sup>95</sup>. The rehearsal continues, however, with the asinine use of dramatic device:

I am the bed that he does not share.

Does anything happen, it happens elsewhere.

A creature of habit, he sleeps on his right,

The one time he doesn't he dies in the night.

But mine are not the sheets of that distinction.

Here is not the place of his extinction<sup>96</sup>.

Despite the crudeness of the narrative and the resentment the scene meets from the actors such as Fitz, Bennett's knowingly poor poem enables each fictional level of the performance to become simultaneously evident for the audience<sup>97</sup>. The poem works in providing the audience an insight into the life of Auden and his preoccupation with regime and order, as well as his sexual encounters referenced through his use of various beds<sup>98</sup>. The use of the word 'habit' echoes not only Auden's 'habit' of writing, but infers Bennett's work as playwright and his interest in the process of making art. I suggest that through the use of

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<sup>95</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>96</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>97</sup> Bennett justifies his ironic use of talking furniture within *The Habit of Art*: 'The stylistic oddities in *The Habit of Art* - rhyming furniture, neighbourly wrinkles, and words and music comparing notes - may just be an attempt to smuggle something not altogether factual past the literalist probation officer who's had me in his charge for longer than I like to think' (Bennett, 2016: 432).

<sup>98</sup> Bennett, Oxford alumnus, reflects on an impression of Auden gleaned whilst studying: 'There were undergraduates I knew at whom Auden made passes, though I was still young and innocent enough to find a pass as remarkable as the person making it' (Bennett, 2016: 425).

narrative devices such as the personification of Auden's furniture, as well as the narration from 'Carpenter' throughout 'Caliban's Day', that a greater sense of understanding is gleaned on the *habit* of making art. Reconstructing the script to include the rehearsing of 'Caliban's Day' enabled the use of theatrical and literary devices, aiding both the content and understanding of *The Habit of Art*.

### *Rewrite*

Within *The Habit of Art* there is a focus upon reworking and rewriting material. The audience faces a recognizable set with staging and props sprawled around to suggest a rehearsal space for 'Caliban's Day'. The stage manager and author sit to one side habitually critiquing and working as an exterior eye of an interior process, commenting on the run they are seeing of their play. Props are grabbed from the areas surrounding the staging area, Auden's dwelling at Oxford, by hands familiar with the script; as the Brewhouse itself is filled with papers and furniture complete with piano and scores atop. The notions of the 'habit' of art are suggested through the use of repeated themes: the props and prompt notes used by the stage manager and author mirror the endless mass of inevitably reworked texts within 'Auden's' home. The traits of the actors are demonstrated and repeated as Henry, playing 'Britten' in 'Caliban's Day' jokes with the producer 'you've seen it all before'<sup>99</sup>, as the audience discovers that the cast and crew have previously collaborated. Perhaps a self-reflection more than a line in the play, Bennett speaks for 'Auden' when asked if he is still writing: 'I have the habit'<sup>100</sup>, demonstrating the notion of representing art, working as 'live' performance anew via its rewritten, documented, versions of itself.

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<sup>99</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>100</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).



Repeated ideas and rewritten musings are suggested within *The Habit of Art* as a reason for the relationship between Britten and Auden ceasing after their productive outpouring lasting over half a decade. Auden's age and success compared with Britten's youth and inexperience exacerbated Britten, who could not own an idea without Auden overshadowing his achievements<sup>101</sup>. Britten moved away artistically from Auden, and Bennett's hypothetical meeting between 'Britten' and 'Auden' is an imagined resolution and final meeting between the two, twenty-five years after their collaborations ended. Bennett's fictitious meeting sees 'Britten' in the midst of his final opera, *Death in Venice*<sup>102</sup>. 'Britten', who spontaneously visits 'Auden' at the Brewhouse, is by now a success in his own right, therefore not requiring the poet's support, or inspiration. 'Auden' however, misinterprets the visit from 'Britten', presuming that 'Britten' is seeking guidance and further collaboration with the writing of the opera<sup>103</sup>. He questions 'Britten', demanding: 'Why am I being resurrected?'<sup>104</sup>. In a metaphor that highlights his (holly) superiority and thereby illustrates the decision of 'Britten' in distancing himself from 'Auden', the notion of rewriting occurs through a sense of repeated motifs. The arrogant manner of 'Auden', reflecting his previous sense of mastery over 'Britten', is recalled through 'Auden's' assumption that 'Britten' intends to resurrect and thus rewrite their relationship.

The plot of *Death in Venice*, recalled by 'Auden' and 'Britten' in *The*

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<sup>101</sup> Bennett, A., (2010) *The Habit of Art*, [programme note].

<sup>102</sup> Bennett's meeting is based on some truth, as he notes that Britten was working on *Death in Venice* at the time when Auden returned to Oxford (Bennett, 2016: 427).

<sup>103</sup> Bennett recalls that Auden's teaching was more a demonstration of his own knowledge during his last years at Oxford, thus limiting his inspiration. He writes, 'What Auden was saying (and he said it pretty regularly) was, 'All do as I do', which is what unhelpful writers often say when asked about their profession, though few with such seeming conviction and authority as the newly inaugurated Professor of Poetry' (Bennett, 2016: 425).

<sup>104</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

*Habit of Art*, reflects the lives of the two artists in a rewriting devised by Bennett. 'Auden' and 'Britten' recall that the writer, Aschenbach, who acts as the central character in the *Death in Venice*, was suffering from a writer's block, and sought new inspiration in Italy. 'Britten' begins to speak of a boy whom Aschenbach sees in his hotel, before 'Auden' interjects:

Yes, where he sees – I don't recall him ever speaking to – a Polish family with a beautiful son of fourteen, with whom he becomes obsessed. Tadzio ... He's supposed to be looking for inspiration. But if he wants to look at a beautiful boy, why does he need an excuse? You never do'<sup>105</sup>.

Although 'Auden' is speaking to 'Britten', Bennett uses this analogy to divulge information on the hidden sexuality of the two artists. Furthering Bennett's own textual references, other Bennett plays such as *The History Boys* (2004) include relationships between adults and minors, as well as homosexual characters. Indeed, Auden is cited as a favourite poet of Hector in *The History Boys*, a homosexual teacher who has sexual encounters with his underage students (Bennett, 2005: 405). Bennett's citing of the *Death in Venice*, in addition to providing insight within *The Habit of Art*, highlights the unmarked although repeated themes within his body of work, which arguably perform anew through their represented versions.

Bennett has indicated that biography, the rewriting of a life, is the central theme within *The Habit of Art* (Bennett, 2016: 457). The playwright, reflecting upon Auden, wrote that:

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<sup>105</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

When he died in 1973 his death seemed to me less a loss to poetry - the poetry was largely over - than a loss to knowledge. Auden was a library in himself and now all this store - the reading, the categories, the associations - had gone down with that great listing clay-coloured hulk. And though much of what he knew he had written down and published, either as lectures or in reviews, there was always more: the flurry of memoirs and reminiscences of the poet and his talk that began almost immediately on his death, not only a testament to his life but an attempt to salvage some of the wisdom he had discarded in conversation - and some of the unwisdom, too (Bennett, 2016: 426).

Bennett, keen to prolong the lives of Britten and the 'library' of Auden (Bennett, 2016: 426), writes a text that allows a faded relationship to work anew, preserving the memory of both artists through a rewriting, and resolution, of history. A reference within *The Habit of Art*, demonstrates that both 'Britten' and 'Auden' are aware of their 'resurrections' within Bennett's work; reflecting the constructed nature of the play. 'Britten' announces that he is dying, to the largely unsympathetic 'Auden', as Bennett via 'Carpenter' simultaneously relays the passing of both:

Dead, you see, you belong to your admirers in your entirety. They own you. They can even quote you to your face – only it will be a dead face – at your memorial service perhaps, or when they unveil the stone in

Westminster Abbey ... W. H. Auden. Benjamin Britten'<sup>106</sup>.

The text works as a metatheatrical concept, as 'Carpenter' speaks in anticipation of the deaths onstage whilst acknowledging the deaths offstage. Throughout the production, a synchronic rather than diachronic concept of time is created whereby the characters of 'Britten' and 'Auden' are both past and present, enabled through 'Carpenter's' acting *with* and narrating *on* the lives of the artists. Carpenter's biographies and Bennett's rewritings thus enable a recycled use of themes, motifs and text within the play, suggesting that documents and detritus of writing create a sense of liveness through their *representation*. Although Bennett describes the deaths of the artists as 'transient', I consider that their rewriting enables a sense of 'unmarked liveness', working between various documents, biographies, scripts and scores to perform anew.

#### *Documenting the unspoken*

I argue that the practice of documenting unspoken conversations creates a sense of liveness, despite their nature as 'unmarked'. Bennett notes that an inspiration for writing *The Habit of Art* was a longing to converse with the two artists:

Not meeting Auden or Britten ... could be said to be one reason for writing the play ... to write a play about them is a way of having a conversation with them that I would never have been capable of having at the time'<sup>107</sup>.

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<sup>106</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

<sup>107</sup> Bennett, A., (2010) *The Habit of Art*, [programme note].

As Bennett was unable to speak with the artists whilst in attendance at Oxford, nor upon graduating and working as a playwright, he considers the process of writing a ‘conversation’ as enabling an adapted form of communication and interaction. Bennett’s use of the term ‘conversation’, a sort of stabilizing or diachronic collaboration, is key in indicating that the writing works as a ‘live’ process; the content of the play, aided by the use of Carpenter as character and biographer, juxtaposes both past and present lives of the artists. It is, however, the synchronic movement between past and present events that reinforces my argument, suggesting there exists an ‘unmarked liveness’ within the writing and presentation of *The Habit of Art*. Post-structuralist Jonathan Culler notes on the idea of repetitions within literature, claiming that there exists an “‘aporia” ... an “‘impasse” of an undecidable oscillation’ (Culler, 1997: 101). I consider that Bennett’s writing between past and present tenses demonstrates Culler’s concept of an ‘undecideable oscillation’ (Culler, 1997: 101) as time is various within *The Habit of Art*, in moving between the live, albeit hypothetical conjecture, and lived.

Post-structuralists Derrida and Gadamer performed and documented an unspoken conversation that I want to argue also emulates Bennett’s concern with ‘live’ writing and engagement. During a conference held at the Goethe Institut in Paris in 1981, the German scholar Gadamer ‘hoped that the occasion would provide an opportunity to begin a serious conversation with Derrida’ (Bernstein, 2008: 577). The anticipated conversation, which in actuality never occurred, would no doubt have been instructive for both parties as leaders in their field<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>108</sup> Bernstein notes: ‘The so-called encounter of Gadamer and Derrida strikes one as a classic instance of non-communication, of two philosophers speaking past each other, neither really making substantial contact’ (Bernstein, 2008: 578). He continues that although Gadamer and

(Bernstein, 2008: 578). Despite their physical absence from each other throughout the conference in Paris, Derrida, who followed an initial paper presented by Gadamer which spoke of his interest in his colleague's paper, responded as if he and Gadamer had indeed met and discussed their viewpoints. Derrida wrote, and subsequently presented a paper to the conference party, using the past subjunctive and claiming that a meeting had arisen, which was fiction rather than a factual event. The actions of Derrida in creating a fictitious narrative between himself and Gadamer results in the writing and speeches being transformed into a live performance and simultaneously a document of events; as well advancing upon Derrida's concerns regarding theories about writing and speech discussed within the field of literary studies. Richard J. Bernstein summarizes the unspoken conversations:

The morning after Gadamer's lecture, Derrida began his brief reply by declaring: "During the lecture and the ensuing discussion yesterday evening, I began to ask myself if anything was taking place here other than the improbable debates, counter-questioning, and inquiries into unfindable objects of thought-to recall some of the formulations we heard. I am still asking myself this question." He then went on to ask three questions, "taking off" from a brief remark that Gadamer made about "good will". Gadamer was clearly perplexed and began his response to Derrida by saying: "Mr. Derrida's questions prove irrefutably that my remarks on text and interpretation, to the extent they had Derrida's well-known position in mind, did not accomplish their

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Derrida met on several occasions, there is no evidence of any dialogue between the pair (Bernstein, 2008: 578).

objective. I am finding it difficult to understand these questions that have been addressed to me” (Bernstein: 2008: 578).

Derrida’s intentions in citing an unspoken conversation were to reinforce a post-structuralist reading of material, possibly commenting upon the binary between speech and writing, therefore different from Bennett’s purpose in writing *The Habit of Art*. However, I consider there to be a similarity between the styles of writing that incorporate varied tenses and suppositions. Bennett’s detailing of an unspoken dialogue enables not only a further dimension of the ‘lives’ of Auden and Britten through their re-presentation to an audience, but moreover a conversation with Bennett, and hypothetically with each other, constructed by the playwright; thereby mirroring the unspoken conversation created by Derrida that supposed a live, simultaneous exchange between himself and Gadamer. I consider the ‘unmarked’ or in this situation unspoken interaction that exists between tenses as displaying a sense of ‘liveness’ between performance and documentation, as exemplified here in the movement or animation between unspoken, though documented, ‘conversations’, and performed writing of the events.

### *The lives of NT Live*

This section will consider Plato’s Book X of *The Republic*, and challenge the notions described by Plato through a comparison with *The Habit of Art* and the NT Live project. As with the unspoken conversation between Derrida and Gadamer that emphasized Derrida’s interrogations of post-structuralism, the unspoken conversation between Plato’s ‘mouthpiece’ Socrates, and his disciple

Glaucon within Book X, is understood to demonstrate a meaning other than the overriding anti-tragedian message described as ‘antitheatrical prejudice’ (Barish: 1981; Freshwater: 2009). Within the Book, Plato claims that the arts are twice removed from original presentations, thus rendering them false; according to Plato, the work of the joiner and the painter represents the work of the original creator, God. The painter, or to use his extended analogy, the poets who present performances at a third stage of relay, know nothing of the subjects they lament, rendering their performances imprudent mimics of an original source. Plato expresses that at the third level of presentation, the painter and indeed the poet need have no knowledge of their subject to be able to paint its picture with either words or other mediums (Plato, 1993: 348). Socrates questions the ideals of the tragic poets: ‘Well, do you think that anyone who was capable of producing both originals and images would devote his energy to making images, and would make out that this is the best thing he’s done with his life?’ (Plato, 1993: 349). Jonas Barish in his analysis of Plato’s work assures that his sentiment, speaking specifically on the proposed banishment of tragic poets from the Republic is merely a ‘jocular palinode’ (Barish, 1981: 11). I will cite Plato’s use of dramatic devices, language and character within Book X to highlight their resemblance to the process and writing of *The Habit of Art*, thereby demonstrating Plato’s argument to banish the arts as satirical evidenced through his use of artistic techniques within writing. My attention to the different degrees of liveness described by Plato will result in an analysis and extension of my theories regarding the layers of performance and documentation created via live streaming of the production.



Plato, as with Bennett, writes a metatheatrical play within a text<sup>109</sup>; and reconstructs ordinary objects as metaphors and dramatic devices to further his narrative. Socrates instructs Glaucon in a duologue that uses an analogy of a bed to display the levels of representation in poetry, separating originals from copies. According to Socrates, the bed, once devised and manufactured, is copied as a painting and therefore the painting of the bed works at a third stage of relay. In this instance the work of the poet is akin to the work of the painter, filling in detail and highlighting elements of the art rather than creating anew. Socrates considers that the poet ‘uses words and phrases to block in some of the colours of each area of expertise’ (Plato, 1993: 352), and rather than praising the artists for their fine and intricate work, it is inferred that they are compensating for a lack of real insight into the subject they are depicting. Socrates further argues that were the work ‘stripped of its musical hues’ (Plato, 1993: 352), it would instantly lose its appeal; hence Plato sees this work as inferior to the ‘original’ presentation as devised by God. Despite Socrates’s claims that the poet ‘destroys the rational part [of the mind] by feeding and fattening up this other part’ (Plato, 1993: 358) through their passionate use of words and colour in description, Socrates’s superlatives and passionate language used to argue his claims about the nature of representation echo the language of the poets, due to Plato’s use of mimetic writing (Barish, 1981: 5). Glaucon, copying his teacher, likewise engages, arguing that holding a mirror to objects to display their images would involve ‘... creating appearances, not actual real things’ (Plato, 1993: 346). I want to compare the use of everyday objects such as Glaucon’s mirror and Socrates’s bed to Bennett’s use of Auden’s furniture cited within *The Habit of*

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<sup>109</sup> The notion of the metatheatrical could be extended to ‘metafictional’ to unite the outputs of Bennett and Plato with Derrida, when considering Derrida’s unspoken conversation with Gadamer previously cited.

*Art*. Plato uses the items to describe and educate Glaucon on his theories, as with Bennett who allows the furniture to speak to the audience within 'Caliban's Day' to further their understanding of the life of Auden. Whilst Bennett's furniture is allowed a narrative, denied to Plato's bed and mirror, both objects arguably still perform: working as features of 'scenes' within Socrates's narrative with Glaucon and their performance of Plato's work.

Plato's connection with performance, despite his apparent prejudice, continues through his analysis of the roles of characters within society. Plato argues that individuals fulfill their role within society, working each day until they reach a level of mastery. At this point, the master teaches a new student, who dedicates their life perfecting the same skill, to likewise pass on to student anew (Barish, 1981: 21). Despite Plato's concern with representation and proposal to banish poets who use mimicry within their work, he advocates this use of teaching: learning by observation and repeating. I equate Plato's theory of establishing the roles of society to the forming of roles and characters within scripts, focusing upon their reappearance that resembles the path between student and master identified by Plato. This is significant because Bennett, speaking on the idea of rewriting characters, notes that:

An author is sometimes surprised by what he or she has written. A play or a novel may start off as having nothing seemingly to do with his or her earlier work, and then as it progresses, or even long after it is finished, it can be seen to relate to themes or persons written about in previous books or plays. It was only when I was finishing the play [*The Habit of Art*] that I realised that Stuart, the rent boy, is only the latest of a succession of not

always similar characters who have found their way into my plays ... I ought to be embarrassed by these recurrences and did I feel they had anything to do with me I might be. But these personages slip in through the back door or disguised as somebody else altogether and it's only when, like Stuart, they want their say and make a plea for recognition and acknowledgement that I realise the uninvited guest is here again (Bennett, 2016: 433).

Bennett considers writing as a process, arguably moving across plays and texts. The character of Stuart can be equally compared with the character of Geoff in *Getting On*, written by Bennett in 1971, and with Posner, a central character within Bennett's *The History Boys* (2004) (Bennett, 2016: 433). In this situation, Bennett's reconstructed characters appear within plays separated by over four decades of writing. Barish critiques Plato's claims about the roles of individuals within society, '... which stand in external frozen rebuke to his world of perpetual motion' (Barish, 1981: 7), as Helen Freshwater, responding to the claims of both Plato and Barish, judges that:

Theatre is singled out for censure in Plato's schema because it can be considered the quintessentially mimetic art. As Barish points out, acting depends upon the adoption and imitation of a range of roles and thus presents a challenge to the smooth functioning of the Republic, which relies upon each citizen's adoption of a single, unchanging identity ... (Freshwater, 2009: 39).

Freshwater's summary is useful in that she identifies the central aims of both Plato and Barish's arguments. However, I challenge Freshwater, and Barish, in suggesting that Plato's mimetic writing and consideration of roles promotes a concern with representation, citing Bennett's use of rewritten characters as evidence to support Plato.

I want to argue that the relationship these rewritten roles of characters within performance works as an example of documentation performing anew, 'live'; another layer of representation as argued by Plato. For example, Bennett's edited scripts work as documents building the history of characters and archiving possible performances, as well as highlighting the repeated roles and traits between himself as playwright and Hynter as director:

Less of this, more of that, the director is in the first instance an editor and so it is with Nicholas Hytner and myself. He likes action more than he does discussion so it's often the more reflective passages that get cut, thought they're not always lost. Sometimes they end up in the introduction or, greatly condensed, I manage to smuggle them back into the text - even though this may have to wait until another play comes along: the fractured speech about biography, for instance, that begins the play [*The Habit of Art*], was actually a casualty from *Kafka's Dick*, written more than twenty years ago. Still, it's a pragmatic process and I'm thankful never to have reached that eminence which would endow every sentence I write with significance and make it untouchable' (Bennett, 2016: 432)<sup>110</sup>.

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<sup>110</sup> Bennett rewrites material for newer plays, but seems reluctant to revise older works; possibly

Bennett's rewriting of material marks his scripts as palimpsests that are full of potential as unmarked documented performances. The discussions between Hytner and Bennett in their roles as editor and writer form a layering of performance, whereby discarded conversations between characters are spoken again, if this time aloud, as both Bennett and Hytner allow them voice. Bennett notes that, 'Always beneath the play you write is the play you meant to write; changed but not abandoned and, with luck, not betrayed, but shadowing still the play that has come to be' (Bennett, 2005: 405). The notion of shadowing, as a representation, creates another level or layer, or life, adding to the overall essence of the performance.

I want to relate the levels of representation outlined by Plato in Book X to the layers of performance and documentation found within the NT Live project. The creator and originator can be seen as playwright, Bennett in the case of *The Habit of Art*, who constructs a text to be rehearsed. This process is comparable to the work of the joiner, in this case a dialogue between two joiners, Bennett and Hytner, effectively assembling the parts and directing the work towards its next stage: the re-presented version of the rehearsals and text onstage at the National Theatre, facilitated by director, Hytner. This work can be compared to the work

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being wary of Auden's willingness to edit, rewriting work to reflect his current attitude and thinking as well as masking previous errors. 'There is some talk in the play about Auden's propensity to edit his poems, with his older self censoring what in his younger self he found dishonest or embarrassing. I think he was mistaken, but provided the original survives, which it does in both print and in his reader's heads, it doesn't seem to me to matter much, and just gives editors and bibliophiles something to talk about. To censor one's own work is tempting, though. While I was writing *The Habit of Art* an earlier play of mine, *Enjoy* 1980, was revived. At its first outing it wasn't well received, and were I writing it today there are things I wouldn't include and dialogue I would do differently. That I didn't cut it or alter it I would like to think was from reading about Auden falling into a similar trap. But if I left the play as it was, it was just through laziness and a feeling that by this time the director and the cast probably knew more about it than I did' (Bennett, 2016: 432). In *The Habit of Art*, Auden speaks to Britten, reflecting Bennett's thinking on the poet: 'Do you repeat yourself? They tell me I do, my that's not my fault. They treat me like an oracle, and that's what oracles do, repeat themselves'. *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

of the painter, who provides an impression of the world and a staged reality. However, as *The Habit of Art* was live-streamed, further stages of representation evolve that move beyond the three tiered model proposed by Plato. Plato notes that there are two parts of the mind, with one part seeing water bending solid objects and the other rationalizing the image as an illusion (Plato, 1993: 353). I compare this ‘sorcery’ (Plato, 1993: 355) to NT Live’s camera work, which evokes the same emotions and feelings within the Encore audiences, as the audience of the initial, ‘live’ screening: there remains an element of liveness or ‘residue’, advocated by the persistent title of the screening as NT Live<sup>111</sup>. I therefore argue that the performance staged at the National Theatre is an alternative ‘original’ or ‘live’ performance, which is relayed and re-lived for cinema audiences through the NT Live process. I argue that the joiner’s role may also be attributed to the NT Live screenings, effectively joining two realities of live and digital display in two and three-dimensional worlds. The Encore screenings, relayed at the discretion of cinemas and independently to the staging of the performance at the National Theatre, arguably demonstrate another level of ‘painting’, screening art for the masses. The three tiered model advocated by Plato therefore extends and cycles as a result of technological innovation, extending his analogy to create a cyclical approach to representation, where the performances or art works, are ‘originals’ also, in turn inspiring further representations and work. The reconstructed nature of works arguably creates a form of documentation as part of its performance, in citing previous stages of

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<sup>111</sup> In an interview with David Sabel, former Head of Digital at the National Theatre and creator of NT Live, we discussed the differences between the various layers of presentation for each performance. I asked about the time delay between showings and Encore screenings, wondering if those performances act more as a document than live screening. Sabel concluded that whilst arguably documentation, the ‘residue’ and suspension of disbelief creates a live feel for the audience. Private interview, Sabel, D., 15/02/12.

presentations during the live showing, such as with the Encore screenings of *The Habit of Art*<sup>112</sup>. The title and claim to essence as NT live, reinforces my claims for an oscillation between the theoretical states of performance and documentation.

This chapter has focused upon the idea of rewriting material for ‘live’ performance, suggesting that the process of writing such as editing and omitting engages a new way of thinking about the relationship between performance and documentation. Bennett’s *The Habit of Art* reflects upon the process of writing and rewriting, identified in the artistic partnership between Auden and Britten. Given the use of documentary and biographical sources required for the construction of the play, a reconstruction of the writing frame was required, as Bennett employed several dramatic devices in order to rewrite history. Bennett’s use of a play within a play format enabled a layered approach for the audience, witnessing a rehearsal within a production, laying bare the literary and dramatic devices that act as components of the fictional play being staged, ‘Caliban’s Day’. The use of talking furniture, disparaged by the fictional ‘actors’, works as an amusing vehicle through which further context is provided for the audience, alongside the details provided by the biographer, who openly acknowledges his use as a ‘device’ within the play<sup>113</sup>. It is the exposure to the techniques of writing that present the audience with a metaphorical representation of both Auden and Bennett’s habit concerning writing, as a dialogue is created between the artists during the production.

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<sup>112</sup> Whilst here I am discussing an alternative mode of display via transmission, the metatheatrical levels of performances enabled through writing also create forms of documents within *The Habit of Art*, as previously mentioned; overall increasing my claims for a layering of ‘documentation’ within performance.

<sup>113</sup> *Drama Online*, 2015, (accessed: 02/05/15).

Bennett's writing, part fact part fiction, documents and performs an unspoken conversation; similarly the interaction between theorists Derrida and Gadamer remained hypothetical. Although Derrida's intentions vary from Bennett's in furthering an academic pursuit of inquiry, Derrida's address at the Goethe Institut parallels the dramatic constructs of *The Habit of Art* in performing an unspoken conversation, 'documented' and arguably reperformed through Gadamer's ensuing remarks.

Derrida's concern with structure inspired for me a comparison between the layers of representation detailed within Plato's Book X of *The Republic* and Bennett's *The Habit of Art*. My comparison between Plato's prejudice towards the arts and writing advances ideas that propose an irony within Plato's approach, cited through the comparison between the use of furniture within Socrates's dialogue and Bennett's talking bed. Plato's discussion of the nature of characters within society, considering specifically their role and function can be mirrored with Bennett's rewriting of roles that function variously throughout his plays. I want to argue for an altered model of representation as advocated by Plato, and adapt his three-tiered layering, arguing that the final stage of relay is effectively the first stage of relay for another performance, in turn another performance, and so on. I argue that this circling within performance, and documentation of performances, is enabled via the addition of technology, specifically live streaming at the National Theatre.

In *The Habit of Art*, Bennett rewrites a speech by Richard Eyre, a former head of the National Theatre. Eyre suggested that the theatre ought to close almost upon its opening (Bennett, 2016: 506). The inclusion of Eyre's speech, documented by Bennett and performed anew, reflects the 'unmarked liveness'



within writing. Bennett's play, reflecting the habit of making art, rewrites an artistic relationship based on an unspoken conversation, moving between performing anew and performing documents of the past. As Bennett worked through delays, rewriting and reconstructing his script, so the National Theatre was simultaneously rewriting its history through the introduction of NT Live. Reconstructing the process of viewing performances as they move between stage and screen, performance and document, the habit of viewing art has altered since its inception.

## REDEVELOP

### REPEAT: Some traces of her

*Waves* was restaged at the National Theatre in 2008. Redefining the production was a very slow process; during the initial rehearsals forty seconds of footage alone required a day of ‘dancing’ with camera cables<sup>114</sup>. Katie Mitchell’s dedication to the media fuelling her production was overwhelming, leaving her unsure as to whether or not the production was ever finished: she confessed that her company ran out of time<sup>115</sup>. Despite Mitchell’s concerns that the work was unfinished, a publication, *Waves* (2008), was commissioned to celebrate its return, setting in print the projected results of the live feed against the adapted script. Simultaneously, another book was printed depicting Mitchell’s latest media work for the National Theatre, ... *Some trace of her* (2008)<sup>116</sup>. Placing the two books side by side, indeed witnessing the two productions, the similarities between the media works are evident. Repeating the idea of projecting a live stream above the stage, set against the work of the actors below, creates thematic images. The differences between the two works, however, are as clearly evident within both productions and publications. Although Mitchell’s opportunity to finish *Waves* was not afforded, ...*Some trace of her* demonstrates traces of her media, redeveloped.

Much like *Waves*, ... *Some trace of her* involved adapting a novel:

Fyodor Dostoyevsky’s *The Idiot*. Mitchell’s forty-page script<sup>117</sup> accompanies the photographs detailed in the National Theatre’s publication. However, rather than focusing on a single author as with *Waves*, Mitchell’s script contains poems by

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<sup>114</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>115</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

<sup>116</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) *Waves*; Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*.

<sup>117</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note].

Emily Dickinson and passages from *The Book of Revelations*; as well as words by Pandora Colin and Mitchell herself (Mitchell: 2008: 5). In addition to the various texts that provided inspiration for *...Some trace of her*, Mitchell's use of media displayed in *Waves* undoubtedly influenced the making of the production: first performed in 2008, *...Some trace of her* coincided with the second run of *Waves* at the National Theatre. My focus for this chapter is the repeated and redeveloped use of influences, particularly media, evidenced between *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*, and I will discuss this in relation to intermediality<sup>118</sup>. I want to argue that the citations between the productions works as an extension of the 'unmarked liveness', suggesting that *Waves* is essentially documented and performed anew in *...Some trace of her*.

In *Travels in Intermedia(lity)* (2012), media theorist Bernd Herzogenrath writes that in 'today's art, creativity and originality are marked by intermediality and sampling, by a combinatory juxtaposition of genres, media, styles and surfaces'<sup>119</sup>. Herzogenrath suggests that art is the result of a meeting between various influences, indicating that their intersection forms the work. Although Herzogenrath relates intermediality to contemporary performance, fellow media theorist Jens Schröter highlights that Samuel Coleridge coined the term as early as 1812. Tracing the evolution of intermediality, Schröter notes the associated term *intertextuality*, as discussed by Julia Kristeva and previously Mikhail Bakhtin<sup>120</sup>. Although this chapter will consider in part the notion of

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<sup>118</sup> *Attempts on her life*, directed by Mitchell, was produced at the National Theatre in 2007, staged between *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*. Mitchell and her company remained the same for both *Waves* and *Attempts on her life*, although the use of media altered. I will discuss the altered use of media during the chapter as well as marking its influences upon *...Some trace of her*. Overall, however, relationship between *Waves* and *...Some trace of her* will remain the focus due to their more obvious aesthetic and intermedial qualities.

<sup>119</sup> *Ebrary*, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>120</sup> *Ebrary*, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

intertextuality, exemplified in the analysis between the two publications of *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*, a more central concern in this thesis is the movement between media. Dick Higgins, part of the Fluxus art movement, initiated the notion of contemporary art working in the ‘unchartered land that falls between’ in his 1966 paper ‘Intermedia’<sup>121</sup>. Focusing on the ‘fall between media’<sup>122</sup>, I suggest that there is an ‘unmarked liveness between *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*. The zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ that I envisage falling between the metaphorical states of performance and documentation, akin to Higgins’s ‘unchartered land’ between media, maps the movement between Mitchell’s productions at the National Theatre.

Dick Higgins’s preoccupation with emphasizing the ‘dialectic between the media’<sup>123</sup> is echoed in Herzogenrath’s search for ‘the links (and cross-breeds) between various art forms, and the various disciplines with which we talk about these media’<sup>124</sup>. Summarized as a ‘between the between’<sup>125</sup>, the definitions and boundaries of intermedia are likewise in flux. I will return to Marshall McLuhan’s assertion that ‘the “content” of one medium is always another medium’ (McLuhan, 2001: 8) and discuss McLuhan’s contributions to the field in relation to Mitchell’s merging of forms; and here instead focus on the four types of intermedia as defined by Schröter<sup>126</sup>. Influenced by Richard Wagner’s total work of art, Schröter’s ‘synthetic intermediality’ describes work that reflects and uses the multiplicity of forms available. The arguable over use of forms, describing multimedia more than intermedia, is addressed within

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<sup>121</sup> *Primary Information*, 1966, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>122</sup> *Primary Information*, 1966, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>123</sup> *Artpool*, 1993, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>124</sup> *Ebrary*, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>125</sup> *Ebrary*, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>126</sup> *Ebrary*, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

Schröter's second type, 'formal or trans-mediality'; where links between one medium and another are highlighted. Schröter however, acknowledges this second type's lack of specificity. He describes his last two types, 'transformational intermediality' and 'ontological intermediality' as two sides of the same coin, thereby demonstrating a debate surrounding the essence of intermediality. Schröter posits:

Do the clearly defined unities that we call media and that are characterized by some kind of media-specific materialities precede the intermedial relation, or does a sort of primeval intermediality exist that conversely functions as a prerequisite for the possibility of such unities?<sup>127</sup>

In describing media as preceding 'intermedial relation', Schröter indicates that the state of intermedia evolved due to an amalgam of media parts. Yet Schröter also considers the notion of a pre-existing state, in suggesting that mergings of media were a direct result of a 'primeval intermediality'<sup>128</sup>. Subverting the chronological relationship described and developing upon the notion of a 'primeval intermediality', Herzogenrath considers that relations between media are abundant with 'rhizomatic interconnections', stating that 'this rhizomatic intermedia(lity) is the quasi-ontological plane underlying all media, out of which the specific media we know percolate, so to speak'<sup>129</sup>. Whilst I will not discuss further the ontological essence of intermedia, the multiplicity of influences inferred by the notion of a 'rhizomatic' intermediality will be considered throughout the chapter.

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<sup>127</sup> Ebrary, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>128</sup> Ebrary, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

<sup>129</sup> Ebrary, 2012, (accessed: 07/09/16).

The theoretical connections between media and intermedia are highlighted in Freda Chapple and Chiel Kattenbelt's *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* (2006). Chapple and Kattenbelt describe intermediality as a specific location between performers, observers and media, meeting at one time (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 12). Whilst citing the influence of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's notions of the rhizome<sup>130</sup> and the diversity of influences inferred theoretically by this analogy (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 19), Chapple and Kattenbelt's definition is very specific: intermediality occurs within a precise time and place. *Mapping Intermediality in Performance* (2010) considers further the issues of retrospection relating to performances beyond specific times and places. Whilst Sarah Bay-Cheng's 2010 publication considers an historical perspective as affecting performance (Bay-Cheng, 2010: 15), my assertion of a performance as imbued within another is not directly addressed. I argue that Mitchell's media work at the National Theatre between 2006 and 2008, as discussed in this chapter, is in part repeated, and in other parts redeveloped, creating intermediality between the performances. The body of work presented by Mitchell suggests that not only the form, but also the relationships between the performances themselves, exhibit intermediality.

I will briefly consider the concept of remediation and discuss my preference for the term intermedia, rather than remediation, in this chapter. Jay David Bolter and Richard Grusin's 1999 *Remediation: understanding new media* (1999) is cited by Chapple and Kattenbelt in *Intermediality in Theatre and Performance* (2006). 'Remediation', as discussed by Chapple and Kattenbelt, involves analyzing the relationship between the arts and literature and digital

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<sup>130</sup> See Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1989).

media. Bolter and Grusin consider the interplay of the relationship as crucial to the state of remediation, expressing that ‘no medium today, and certainly no single media event, seems to do its cultural work in isolation from other media, any more than it works in isolation from other social and economic forces’ (Bolter and Grusin, 1999: 15). Concluding that ‘what is new about new media comes from the particular ways in which they refashion older media and the ways in which older media refashion themselves to answer the challenges of new media’ (Bolter and Grusin, 1999: 15), there is a suggestion that the representation of a medium is presented anew in another. Whilst Chapple and Kattenbelt acknowledge the significance of the statement and the publication, they observe that ‘Bolter and Grusin do not pay any attention to theatre’ (Chapple and Kattenbelt, 2006: 14) within their analysis. This simple observation is remedied in Chapple and Kattenbelt’s text, where the key issues of remediation such as immediacy, transparency and hypermediacy are discussed in relation to theatre and performance. I acknowledge that Mitchell’s work utilizes digital performance and arguably the relationship between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* is based upon a remediation of ideas and technology. However, given that Mitchell’s work is presented in and is essentially considered as (national) ‘theatre’, I have chosen to term the relationship as one of intermedia, extending the definition of intermedia suggested to include the relationship between bodies of work; in this situation the media work of Mitchell and the company. Whilst I will cite the work of McLuhan and others who arguably contributed to Bolter and Grusin’s 1999 publication, I will continue to term the relationship between Mitchell’s media work at the National Theatre as one exemplifying intermedia, rather than remediation.

In this chapter I will consider the productions *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, citing also *Attempts on her life* (2007), Mitchell's other media work produced at the National Theatre between 2006-2008. I consider the adapted roles of both Mitchell and Leo Warner as directors, as well as the changing roles of the company, considering specifically the altered use of the Foley actors and their contributions to the media relay. Addressing the use of media specifically, I will trace the repeated and redeveloped techniques used between productions, and discuss the honing of lighting and sound, as well as the aesthetic alterations and filmic qualities displayed during ...*Some trace of her*. I will lastly consider the consequences of repeating techniques, arguably documenting and performing work anew, and Mitchell's move towards intermedia and merging outputs.

### *Redeveloped roles*

The use of the cast and their role in relaying media altered between the productions of *Waves*, *Attempts on her life* and ...*Some trace of her*, Mitchell's media productions staged at the National Theatre. Despite the cast of *Waves* being identical to the cast of *Attempts on her life*, the productions of *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* share similarities, such as using the actors to create a quasi radio play performance. However, the developments of role and character highlighted in *Attempts on her life* undoubtedly influenced the later production of ...*Some trace of her*. *Attempts on her life* was written as a framework, 'without assigning dialogue to particular characters and compromising seventeen disconnected scenes'; 'it is left up to the director how the play should take shape'<sup>131</sup>. As a result, the production became a collaborative work between

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<sup>131</sup> Royal Court Theatre, 2006, (accessed: 27/08/15).



Mitchell and playwright Martin Crimp, who redrafted several scenes specifically for the National Theatre production, ten years after its original showing at the Royal Court<sup>132</sup>. The premise of the National Theatre production was a live chat show with a half million pound prize. The production would include dancing and singing, involving the use of technology surrounding the stage, capturing the outputs. The rehearsal process was based around improvisations that were subsequently reworked into the performances; thus the audiences were exposed to a staged production that felt spontaneous and impulsive. The rules of the improvisation, unbeknownst to the audience and translated from rehearsal to performance, dictated that the attention of the judging panel must be maintained throughout with at least one song and one dance number enacted. The supposedly unprompted work of the performers, albeit practised during rehearsals, resulted in the production feeling ‘live’ to the audience: ‘If ten of the actors played a sense of nervous apprehension but one played that the show had been on TV for years and knew exactly what was coming next, the cohesion of the world of the play would be lost’<sup>133</sup>. Martin Crimp notes: ‘I wanted to make this play, live, anew, as it were’<sup>134</sup> and though speaking on adaptation, Crimp’s determination for live plays working ‘anew’ was arguably achieved through the specific roles of Mitchell’s actors in assembling in an improvisatory style, rehearsed production. The sense of trepidation for an audience in witnessing a seemingly unmapped and chaotic performance is furthered by the use of media: the audiences require the technology to power the performance as much as Mitchell and her company, in that it fuels the workings of the play. The actors

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<sup>132</sup> National Theatre Education, 2007, (accessed: 27/08/15).

<sup>133</sup> National Theatre Education, 2007, (accessed: 27/08/15).

<sup>134</sup> Crimp, M., (2015) *Attempts on his life – Martin Crimp – playwright, translator, translated*, Presented at: Institut Français du Royaume University Workshop series, University College London.

relied upon the functionality of the equipment to ensure the viability of the production. The use of media progressed, although the actor's use of improvisation was not repeated, in Mitchell's following production, ...*Some trace of her*. Repeating but developing the use of the Foley actors from *Waves*, the sense of purpose for the actors in providing their characters with additional background knowledge was a practice that transferred from *Attempts on her life* to ...*Some trace of her*. In ...*Some trace of her*, Mitchell encouraged the actors to create another persona for their Foley parts, explaining to her cast that the Foley characters had been commissioned to transmit the projected footage gathered during the performance through the live feed to The White Cube Art Gallery<sup>135</sup>. Providing the actors with this scenario, mirroring the alternative, imagined and offstage world conjured originally in *Attempts on her life*, each actor was also asked to consider how their Foley character connected to their nineteenth-century character within the 'source' text, Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*. Actor Sam Crane, for example, imagined a meeting between his contemporary and nineteenth-century characters through illness and death, where family ill health became the bridge between the two identities<sup>136</sup>, developing a sense of intertextuality between the 'source' text and Mitchell's adaptation. There is further crossover between Mitchell's productions, as the roles of the actors develop. The physical labour and work of the Foleys onstage within *Waves*, missing from *Attempts on her life*, is repeated and developed within ...*Some trace of her*, due to the influence of Mitchell and Crimp's production. The citations between the redeveloped roles of the actors in each of Mitchell's productions are examples of intertextuality, discussed as an alternative term for intermediality. The

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<sup>135</sup>National Theatre Education, 2008, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>136</sup>National Theatre Education, 2008, (accessed: 30/08/15).

productions work, I want to argue, as reperformed documents: the roles of the actors and their work using media can be traced between the three productions. The citations between the productions are an example of what I am calling an ‘unmarked liveness’, which is located in the zone between Mitchell’s National Theatre outputs. In addition to the use of media onstage that I argue exhibits an ‘unmarked liveness’, specifically through the use of video and live streaming, I assert that the relationship between the productions moves between performance and documentation also, evidenced through the redevelopment of ideas.

In addition to the redeveloped roles of the actors, the roles of the directors altered between Mitchell’s various media productions at the National Theatre. The strand of performance involving media has encouraged a doubling of Mitchell’s role as director: directing actors within the theatre, as well as directing sequences of camerawork for the live stream. As Mitchell has admitted on several occasions that the technological aspects of the work reached beyond her training and experience as a director<sup>137</sup>, Leo Warner was commissioned to guide the actors as well as Mitchell through the process of devising for film and creating with media. Warner’s roles, specified in the publications of *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*, altered for each production. Described as ‘video designer/cinematographer’ for his contribution to *Waves*, (Mitchell, 2008), Warner is listed as the ‘director of photography’ in the publication of *...Some trace of her* (Mitchell, 2008). Whilst Mitchell acknowledges the change in title, discussing that Warner is essentially a photographer, she expresses that his role is too diverse to isolate to any singular term<sup>138</sup>. Warner writes positively on the

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<sup>137</sup> See for example, Mitchell’s writing about video in her book *The Director’s Craft: A Handbook for the Theatre*. ‘When I first thought about using video, I was rather naïve...’ (Mitchell, 2009: 91).

<sup>138</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 31/07/13.

various roles, as a reflection of the multifaceted form that was created during *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*. As movement between theatre work and filmic work was undertaken, Warner chose the title of ‘director of photography’ because of the filmic connotations associated with shooting<sup>139</sup> as Mitchell searched for a way of describing his skills<sup>140</sup>; indeed, Warner was named as ‘video designer’ in the intermediary work, *Attempts on her life*<sup>141</sup>. The diversity in roles, reflected in Warner’s titles, illustrates the development of the form; oscillating between film, photography, video and theatre. The merging of genres reflects my assertion that the media outputs devised by Mitchell and the company at the National Theatre are examples of intermedia. Not only do the roles of the actors and directors alter as the nascent form develops, but moreover the use of the mixed media develops during this period also.

### *Repeated ideas*

Akin to Herzogenrath’s concept of a ‘rhizomatic’ intermediality, Mitchell’s productions at the National Theatre demonstrate a conflux of repeated ideas and shared influences, specifically with regards to the use of media and staging. The techniques applied to create the live output, exhibited in both *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, relate the two productions, with Warner suggesting that ...*Some trace of her* acted as a sequel to *Waves*<sup>142</sup>. There are several references between Mitchell’s productions that work as citations of her previous work, for example, the use of props onstage present the audience with the workings and constructed parts of the performances, married by the live stream projected above stage.

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<sup>139</sup> National Theatre Education, 2008, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>140</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 31/07/13.

<sup>141</sup> *Fifty Nine Productions*, 2007, (accessed: 21/09/16).

<sup>142</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note].

Although largely concealed during ...*Some trace of her*<sup>143</sup>, the props were not only present within both productions, but used in some cases to create the same effect. For instance, in attempting to replicate rain, a clear sheet of hard plastic with water poured down one side is placed in front of actors. The actors put their face next to the plastic, and a close-up shot of the effect projected on the screen above them suggests rainwater hitting and slowly dripping down a window. Although the narrative varies between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, both productions utilize this effect to frame their actors (Mitchell, 2008: 18; Mitchell, 2008: 9). In a similar use of close-up shots, both *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* use reflections to represent another person in a character's stream of consciousness. Enabled by the use of mirrors onstage, the central character stands close to the prop whilst a secondary character moves around the central character, appearing momentarily. The captured images on the screen above the stage are focused solely on the mirror, allowing a personal shot of the central character to appear invaded by the momentary citing of the fellow actor (Mitchell, 2008: 21; Mitchell, 2008: 20). Probing further through the use of single body part close-up shots, intense moments of filming are displayed for the audience in both productions also. For example, in suggesting self-harm, a wrist is shown on the screen during *Waves*, made more dramatic by the use of blood that swirls in the bowl of water underneath the character's hand (Mitchell, 2008: 80). Also shot from a similar angle, an actor's hand is palm down with a

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<sup>143</sup> The shadows cast on stage during ...*Some trace of her* result in the props being hidden, as compared with their highlighted status throughout *Waves*. The plethora of props used in *Waves* is diminished in ...*Some trace of her*, however, meaning that despite the shadows onstage, there are few props or staging areas to mask. Indeed, the two shelving areas, effectively containing the production of *Waves*, are removed in ...*Some trace of her*; as additionally the tables used to create the dining scene in *Waves* are revealed only at curtain call in ...*Some trace of her*. National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

bloodied knife, hovering above a water bowl in ...*Some trace of her* (Mitchell, 2008: 83). The citations referenced between the two productions demonstrate an example of intermediality: not only is the use of the video and live stream highly significant in creating the dramatic onstage effects, moreover the media device is replicated from work to work. I would also suggest that the shots and devices created during *Waves* are then documented within ...*Some trace of her*, as the images conjure a relationship with the past production. Whilst ...*Some trace of her* was staged two years after *Waves*, the replaying of *Waves* at the National Theatre during the same season as ...*Some trace of her* enhances my argument in suggesting a degree of symmetry and development between the productions, as if the latter shows document or enable a live repetition of earlier performances. Rehearsals for the second run of *Waves* at the National Theatre undoubtedly influenced ...*Some trace of her*, where use of media is repeated in the scenes highlighted.

Whilst *Waves* featured live streaming as a media device to enhance performance and reflect the abstract text penned by Wolf, ...*Some trace of her* repeated the use of live stream but altered its function within the production. *Waves*, and indeed *Attempts on her life*, use live-streamed action in sections throughout performances, and Warner explains that the nature of the productions lent themselves to fragmentary display<sup>144</sup>. By contrast, however, the live streaming technique was used continuously throughout ...*Some trace of her*<sup>145</sup>.

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<sup>144</sup> Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>145</sup> Warner acknowledges that the projector relayed some 'pre-recorded interludes' that interrupted the live streaming, but emphasizes that these episodes were used momentarily as a 'palette cleanser'. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16. As this does not stop transmission from the projector, I will write that the production used constant streaming. Perhaps more aptly phrased, Dan Rebellato summarizes the streaming as 'near-continuous': 'Far more than in *Waves* or *Attempts on Her Life*, . . . *some trace of her* offered a near-continuous filmic projection', [sic] Myilibrary, 2006, (accessed 16/06/16).

Warner explains in the programme notes of the production that this move to constant streaming was not an advanced use of media<sup>146</sup>. The technology remained unchanged between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, and, as Warner describes, considers instead that the company ‘got better and better at using the tools’<sup>147</sup>. He expresses that the repeated technology but altered ‘creative’ and ‘conceptual’ development<sup>148</sup>, shifted the overall feel of the production: Warner’s asserts that the success of ...*Some trace of her* relied upon the awareness of the Foley actors<sup>149</sup>. More crucially however, the consistency of the output and the demands on the Foley actors altered the emphasis of ...*Some trace of her*, as Warner expresses, ‘this [production] is taking the film world’s technique of body-doubles to the next level’<sup>150</sup>. The redeveloped role of the Foleys in envisaging themselves as not only nineteenth but also twentieth-century actors simultaneously, aids the media in performance through ensuring the maintained focus of the cast; doubling their role *on* stage as well as their role *in* staging. Whilst in essence the ideas are repeated between Mitchell’s media productions at the National Theatre, specifically between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, the developments over time indicate an overall advancement or honing of form, reflecting my assertions of intermediality between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*.

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<sup>146</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note].

<sup>147</sup> Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>148</sup> Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>149</sup> Warner notes: ‘...the essence of the production relies on the ability of the actors to recreate a series of precise set ups night after night, live on stage’, Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note]. Although this is found in the programme notes for ...*Some trace of her*, I consider the same reliance upon the actors to fuel *Waves* and *Attempts on her life*. I accept however, that the constant streaming creates an additional pressure for the cast of ...*Some trace of her*, in maintaining effectively two live outputs through the production.

<sup>150</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note]. I will return to the issue of forms and the filmic qualities inferred by Warner in relation to ...*Some trace of her* at a later point in the chapter.

*Some traces of her*

A more imaginative use of lighting in ....*Some trace of her*, demonstrates a significant move towards aesthetically pleasing art, in contrast to the pragmatism adopted in *Waves*. Ultimately altering the framing of the live-streamed footage, the onstage actors were immersed in more ambitious lighting styles. The company studied several nineteenth-century photographers and artists, such as Gustav Klimt, searching for the correct lighting to aid their shots. The artistic influences of Lady Hawarden and Julia Margaret Cameron were the most significant, resulting in the use of wash lighting, spreading across the stage rather than lighting selected, specific parts. Lady Hawarden also influenced the use of paler, more natural colours<sup>151</sup>. The paleness of the washes created, surrounded the actors, allowing filming from wider angles and enhancing the use of shadows in ...*Some trace of her*. Whilst *Waves* was not restricted to close-up shots<sup>152</sup>, the frame is extended in ...*Some trace of her*; creating beautiful images that feel more sensual and textured because of the space and softness of image shown beyond the actor. The closer headshots of *Waves* are repeated within ...*Some trace of her*, although intersected with mood driven focuses enabled by the effective lighting, meaning the surroundings can mirror the emotional passages depicted onstage and onscreen. During the closing moments, Myshkin, who is part of a love triangle that ends with his return to a psychiatric unit, sits alone and still, washed in blue and misty grey shades. Gradually more shadow than lighting is cast, subsuming the actor's body and reducing its significance, as the character

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<sup>151</sup> National Theatre Education, 2008, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>152</sup> Indeed, the dinner scene involved three actors playing in front of the camera simultaneously, as mentioned in chapter one. Nevertheless the sense of movement afforded in ...*Some trace of her* is missing from the more pragmatic filming of *Waves*.



is eventually left alone in his darkness<sup>153</sup>. As a result of this preoccupation with the actors onstage, washed in subtle pale hues, there are contrasting dark areas that surround the Foley actors. Where the lighting from lamps and other props afforded some significance to the central characters in *Waves* without submerging the Foleys into black, the Foleys in ...*Some trace of her* work out of the light, thus mostly out of sight<sup>154</sup>. Whilst I am not suggesting that significant lighting was afforded to the Foleys when working in *Waves*, due to the increased significance in lighting of the actors in ...*Some trace of her*, the Foley actors and the construction of the media they demonstrate are far from centre stage, both literally and metaphorically. If the media in *Waves* echoed Wagner's sentiments of a total work of art where the construction of the image is as important as the acting and streamed output, then ...*Some trace of her* prioritizes the work of the actors, masking the making of the media and possibly lessening its relevance in the production<sup>155</sup>. Arguably however, the increased attention paid to the lighting, developed from *Waves* to ...*Some trace of her*, illustrates a more sculpted form of media. The darkened areas of the Foley artists contrast with the wash of colours, highlighting the actors onstage and thus changing the quality of image on the projected screen<sup>156</sup>. Where the lighting techniques employed by the creative cast enhance the overall production and affectively develop the media on display, the impact of the media echoes Warner's assertion that ...*Some trace of her* became a more sophisticated output than *Waves*. I consider this relationship

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<sup>153</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>154</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>155</sup> Perhaps due to the heightened sense of aesthetics, darkness surrounds the two prop areas used by the Foley artists in ...*Some trace of her* that were on show throughout *Waves*, revealed only as the houselights rise at the end of the performance. National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

<sup>156</sup> My reference to 'quality' here relates to the traits and characteristics, thus overall aesthetic, of the image; rather than the technical quality of the live feed.

between lighting techniques in Mitchell's work as an example of Schröter's trans-mediality, where artistic outputs are related and thus arguably documented, although distinct in their individual performances.

The projected images on the screen above the stage during ...*Some trace of her* offered a distinctive style of lighting<sup>157</sup>. Contrasting the light colours used in the washes, the relay displayed tonal colours throughout, showing a series of blacks, whites and greys. Unlike *Waves* where the Foleys are offered some light to assist with shots that were subsequently screened in colour; in ...*Some trace of her* the Foley's darkened areas around stage beautifully juxtapose the pockets of colour onstage in another move towards aestheticism. The contrast of the light, sepia shades alongside the darkness, creates an effect that leaves the audience feeling as though they are in a darkroom, with small snatches of light seeping in from an accidentally opened blind, as the processed image overhead, tonal and reversed, comes to life. Adding to the feel of photographic development, a repeated technique of freezing the live feed, used within *Waves* to suggest 'photographs' taken at a meal with friends, aids a depiction of an epileptic episode during ...*Some trace of her*. As if tracing the chaotic movement on stage more closely, the screened projections capture the distress and effectively depict Myshkin's helplessness during his episode<sup>158</sup>. Working together as a series of snapshots, the flashes of lighting onstage are reflected in the held moments of projection, replicating strobe lighting and producing effectively a sensory or epileptic attack for the audience. Altering the perspective of the live streaming

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<sup>157</sup> I am not referring to stage lighting here, as with the example of washes; rather I am concerned with the use of colour that illuminates onto the stage and into the audience, via the projector screen. I consider this as another source and therefore form of lighting used in Mitchell's media works.

<sup>158</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

through the use of tonality, the relayed scenes arguably appear documentary in style, evidencing the trauma endured by the victim of an epileptic fit. Citing the thoughts of literature and film scholar Jon Erickson, Philip Auslander notes that black-and-white photography is associated more strongly with performance documentation than colour photography; which asserts its own sense of object, indicating that the object framed becomes a subject itself (Auslander, 2006: 2). Contrasting with the colour streaming displayed in *Waves*, emulating and thereby substantiating the work of the Foleys below stage in demonstrating that their movements relate directly to the live projections above stage, *Wave's* 'photographs' created by freezing the live stream are screened in black-and-white; and are later recalled in dark tones when the characters are searching through 'photo albums'. In this regard, the 'photographs' from *Waves* are redeveloped within ...*Some trace of her*; the use of the tonal colours on screen documents Myshkin's ill-health and mirrors his dark situation, matched in the haphazard use of live stream, working as though on intermittent throughout his attack and thereby emulating the frozen nature of the 'photographs' enacted in *Waves*. Considering the nature of black-and-white photography, and specifically its relationship with documentation, Erickson notes:

There is a sense of mere utility in black-and-white, which points to the idea that documentation is really only a supplement to a performance having to do with context, space, action, ideas, of which the photograph is primarily a reminder (Erickson, 1999: 98).

Whilst I acknowledge that Erickson speaks directly of black-and-white

photography, the arguments can be extended here to Mitchell's media display. Although I agree with Erickson's notion of the 'reminder' in that the use of black-and-white frozen 'photographs' recalled in *Waves* worked to show a memory of the dinner meeting between friends, as well as the epileptic sequence documenting both physically and emotionally a distressing episode in ...*Some trace of her*, I contest the assertion that the use of black-and-white images working as documentation are a 'supplement to a performance' (Erickson, 1999: 98). In suggesting that the black-and-white stream is a supplement to the performance, and that the documentation relayed is effectively a secondary reminder of the work onstage, the priority of the performance alters. For example, the use of media manipulated by Mitchell and the company is neither a supplement, nor a primary focus in the performance; rather every element complements one another onstage and onscreen. Regarding the use of lighting as evidence of the complementary nature of the on and above stage worlds, I consider that tonal colours used within the streaming of ...*Some trace of her* move beyond the 'sense of mere utility' (Erickson, 1999: 98), uniting the shadows and subtle use of lighting created onstage, above stage. I further contest Erickson's considerations that black-and-white documentation is supplementary to performance because of the nature of Mitchell's works that troubles the 'states' or received notions about performance and documentation. Although the projector screen above the stage arguably documents the epileptic episode experienced by Myshkin, it is the simultaneous work of the on *and* above-stage relays that merge to craft a similar sense of ill-feeling within the audience. In this regard, the stage acts as both performance and documentation, encompassing the actors and their digital selves as part of this entity. Referring briefly to the

publications of both *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* to consider the nature of performance and documentation in relation to black-and-white images, complementing the scenes projected via the live feed, Mitchell's publications are displayed in colour and black and white, respectively. Arguably, Erickson's thinking that black-and-white documentation is a supplement to the performance is challenged by the use of colour photographs that equally document the images displayed during *Waves*. Auslander considers that the use of colour photography indicates an assertive image in its own right, suggesting that the publication of *Waves* is a renewed version of the performance. However, the publications detailed only the live feed, thereby missing the workings of the actors and Foleys onstage, marking the publication of *Waves* as an example of documentation rather than a renewed performance, therefore theoretically akin to the publication of ...*Some trace of her*. Additionally, due to the production of 'photographs' in *Waves*, several images are published in black and white, as with the images displayed throughout the publication of ...*Some trace of her*. The traces between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, with specific regards to the lighting, demonstrate not only intermedia via the manipulation of the live stream in form and function, but moreover a merging between performance and documentation.

The nature of the images created onscreen complements the overall scene onstage where the two forms juxtapose and become of increasing significance in ...*Some trace of her*. Warner explains that:

Every image we produce has at least a dual reality – its own self-contained reality on screen, and also its constructive reality on stage, where the audience can see precisely how it is being produced. As well as

meaning that there is a double canvas – both surfaces of which are in near constant simultaneous use – it also means that there are two palettes in use, each with its own set of connections and potential interpretations<sup>159</sup>.

I am interested in Warner's notion of a 'dual reality'<sup>160</sup> presented onstage, where the significance of the stage and screen are equal and aid each other in relating a series of images and ideas to an audience. The idea of a 'double canvas' and the 'two palettes' relate to the idea of a 'dual reality'<sup>161</sup>; the forms of the two entities merge to create an overall aesthetic, however the components that constitute the realities maintain their status as discrete forms. In his own artistic analogy, critic and writer Aleks Sierz noted when reviewing *...Some trace of her*, that the work was 'calculatedly cubist'<sup>162</sup>, an assertion substantiated by Mitchell herself, who considers directing in relation to the art form<sup>163</sup>. Further to Warner's notion of a dual reality that implies the coming together of two forms, Mitchell's three dimensional, architectural perspective, advocates an intense scrutiny of each theatrical component and their collective aesthetic. Writing on cubism in order to conclude his thoughts on media, McLuhan notes that:

cubism substitutes all facets of an object simultaneously for the "point of view" or facet of perspective illusion. Instead of the specialized illusion

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<sup>159</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) *...Some trace of her*, [programme note].

<sup>160</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) *...Some trace of her*, [programme note].

<sup>161</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) *...Some trace of her*, [programme note].

<sup>162</sup> *Proquest reader*, 2009, (accessed: 29/09/16).

<sup>163</sup> Mitchell notes in interview her idea of projecting a 'theatrical cubism' onstage; (Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13) noting also at the post show talk of *Fraulein Julie* that she thinks constantly in three dimensions, viewing every plane of a performance. *Fraulein Julie*, By Strindberg, A., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 30/04/2013. In 2016, she concludes on her performances: 'I'm thinking about architecture. I'm thinking about the whole machine' (Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16).

of the third dimension on canvas, cubism sets up an interplay of planes and contradiction or dramatic conflict of patterns, lights, textures that “drives home the message” by involvement ... In other words, cubism, by giving inside and outside, the top, bottom, back and front and the rest, in two dimensions, drops the illusion of perspective in favor of instant sensory awareness of the whole. Cubism, by seizing on instant total awareness, suddenly announced that the medium is the message [sic] (McLuhan, 2001: 13)

Although writing over forty years before the production of ...*Some trace of her*, McLuhan’s assertions can be analyzed in relation to Mitchell’s theories on directing her media work. Contesting that ‘the message, it seemed, was the “content”, as people used to ask what a painting was *about*’ [original emphasis] (McLuhan, 2001: 14), McLuhan concludes that ‘the “content” of one medium is always another medium’ (McLuhan, 2001: 8). I consider that Mitchell’s work exemplifies the notion that ‘the “content” of one medium is always another medium’ (McLuhan, 2001: 8), indicating the presence of one work within another and creating an endless web of relations and palimpsestic layers of intertextuality. Although I will latterly discuss the creation of *Waves* and, borrowing McLuhan’s terminology, consider whether or not the “content” created Mitchell’s ‘medium’ (McLuhan, 2001: 8), I will here consider the formal relationship between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, reconsidering momentarily Mitchell and the company’s other media work produced at the National Theatre, *Attempts on her life*. I have previously argued that the ‘photographs’ created in *Waves* directly influenced the frozen moments that depicted an epileptic episode

shown in ...*Some trace of her*. Both moments involved a manipulation of media: in addition to the camerawork of the Foley actors in crafting the images streamed above the stage, the paradoxical ‘freezing’ of the *live* stream alters the use of the screened projections. I have highlighted the significance of the work of the Foleys, their hidden approach and yet their increased sense of purpose in ...*Some trace of her*, developed from discussions when devising *Attempts on her life*. Here, I want to argue that the meetings between the productions suggest intermediality, as demonstrated through an analysis of Mitchell’s media body of work. Although each Mitchell production documents the writings of Virginia Woolf, Crimp and Dostoyevsky (et al), each cites the previous work, specifically seen in the use of media and live streaming. Therefore the productions work as both performances playing to live audiences, and performing documents, repeating and redeveloping. The increased significance of directing ‘cubist’ work grew from rehearsing *Waves* whilst simultaneously producing ...*Some trace of her*. Evidenced in the publications the National Theatre produced around these productions, the juxtaposition of the two productions demonstrates traces between Mitchell’s outputs. I assert that Warner’s interest in a ‘dual reality’ highlights not only the use of the Foley artists and their twinned roles as actors and manipulators of media onstage; but moreover the ‘dual reality’ of each Mitchell media output: where the production works both individually, and significantly, as part of a growing body of inter-play with intermedia<sup>164</sup>. The movement between these productions is an example of ‘unmarked liveness’: a hypothetical merging of performance and documentation, where the traces of one production work as documents performed in another.

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<sup>164</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note].



### *Inter-media*

A significant move within ...*Some trace of her* involved the actors speaking directly into the microphone<sup>165</sup>, which changed the radio play style of performance developed in *Waves*. In allowing the characters to converse directly, rather than the Foleys speaking on behalf of the characters, the projected relay captured and fully replicated the scenes enacted on the stage; working as a digital representation or a effectively a live film sequence. During *Waves*, the Foleys divided the role of the central characters, which oftentimes saw one Foley actor speaking the thoughts of a character, whilst another Foley actor played the physical body of the same character; as another Foley actor was required to handle props, another to move staging, and so on. In this regard the projected material screened above stage, brought together and relayed scenes that were shown in isolation below: whereas the contributing elements could be identified by an audience, the amalgamated version was displayed as completed on the live stream only. That the actors within ...*Some trace of her* spoke as their character, rather than narrating as a Foley actor the thoughts of another character, changed the nature of the production. Whereas *Waves* echoed a radio play set up juxtaposed with live streaming, ...*Some trace of her* worked as a sort of ‘film set’; as though the audience were sitting next to the director, viewing both the actors onstage as well as previewing scenes for a cinema screen, visible through the projected live-streamed display. The redeveloped use of the media creates a partnership between the physical and digital bodies, as well as an integration of modes of display, exemplifying intermedia. The stage media of lighting and

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<sup>165</sup> National Theatre Archive, (2015) ...*Some trace of her*, (Dir) Mitchell, K., London: Cottesloe National Theatre, date of viewing: 20/08/15.

sound are adapted in ...*Some trace of her* to prioritize the actors onstage, working to emphasize the characters, rather than the Foleys actors as in *Waves*. I argue that this shift in priority results in a more filmic display on the live stream, and marries the onstage and above stage areas simultaneously as though combining theatre with film<sup>166</sup>. When speaking on the nature of her work, Mitchell discusses the closeness of the relationship between film and video. Suggesting that film is pre-recorded, Mitchell asserts that the use of video in her performances maintains the live element akin to the ‘liveness’ of theatrical display. She discusses in a lengthy analysis with Rebellato:

Film is a beautiful medium but it’s totally safe, in that the images are pre-recorded and pre-edited. There is nothing live going on and although it can generate very strong emotions, like fear or sadness, it is not really happening. I love live performance and its edginess, how it teeters on the edge of possible collapse from moment to moment. I also love its collective nature with the strange contract between the actors and the audience. The work using video in *Waves* was done live, with live acting and live camera operating. The breathing of the live operator was present in all the shots of the actors, affecting the framing and the way the camera moved. The delicate dance between live operator and live actor is entirely theatrical and not filmic. In fact when a film-maker friend of mine, Grant Gee, first looked at one of the live video shows he said he felt physically sick. From his point of view the live operating put the film in jeopardy, frame to frame, and that was something he could not cope with being a

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<sup>166</sup> Whilst I am not advocating that Mitchell’s performances are a literal meeting of film and theatre, the characteristics of the two areas of staging allow me to suggest a theoretical merging of the two modes of display.

consummate maker of pre-recorded film. The video also gives everyone in the audience access to the tiny details in the acting that normally are the privilege of the people watching in the first few front rows (Rebellato, 2014: 220).

Mitchell advocates that her media work, beginning with *Waves* and subsequently developed in productions such as ...*Some trace of her*, is a live entity formed from ‘live acting and live camera operating’ (Rebellato, 2014: 220). Mitchell considers that the relationship between her Foleys, operating the cameras and staging, and her actors working as characters onstage, marks an area of live theatrical display. Citing the breathing of the Foley actors, and the inevitable shaking of the streamed display filmed with nervous hands, Mitchell describes her live performance as on the ‘edge of possible collapse’ (Rebellato, 2014: 220): that the breathing of a camera operator may shake a shot out of focus or that the inadvertent push of a button may black out the feed altogether. Acknowledging the fragility of the work, Mitchell speaks of the ‘delicate dance between the live operator and live actor’, insisting that the movement is ‘entirely theatrical and not filmic’ (Rebellato, 2014: 220). Citing her film maker friend Grant Gee and his aversion to Mitchell’s manipulation of media works to reiterate the live qualities of her work: Gee’s anxiety at watching was borne from concern that the ‘live operating put the film in jeopardy’, as Mitchell concludes that there is ‘nothing live going on’ in pre-recorded film (Rebellato, 2014: 220). Mitchell’s work moves beyond a purely ‘live’ display and through the use of live stream displays an ‘unmarked liveness’; an area between performance and documentation, genres and forms of capturing artistic displays. Mitchell’s

screened images, I argue, are as much examples of documentation, because of the recording opportunities afforded by the use of live streaming; such as freezing and representing previously shot footage anew. Through the use of recording technology, I argue that the work shifts theoretically from live performance as prescribed by Mitchell, towards a more filmic display. The proximity between the audience and the digital bodies, highlighted by Mitchell as an advantage of using video within her productions, is a trait more closely associated with film and cinema through the use of close –up shots, rather than a characteristic of theatre and performance. Furthermore, I argue that the actors speaking directly into microphones, as within ...*Some trace of her*, provides a technological prosthetic and a visual connection between the physical body and the screened body. Perceiving the microphone as an augmenting device, I consider that the supplementary use of technology enables a new layer of communication between the corporeal and digital bodies onstage. Although I acknowledge that Mitchell's productions exist within a live performance space, I consider that the theoretical zone between the display of physical and digital bodies provides an area of 'unmarked liveness', thus furthering the layers of liveness that Mitchell attributes to her work. Whilst Mitchell does not consider her work 'film' as she argues that films do not produce 'live' work, her use of filmic display theoretically alters her work as it enables an oscillation between documentation and performance: between the digital and physical bodies. By suggesting that Mitchell's media productions lie between performance and documentation, I thereby infer that the pieces work between states, echoing the idea of between as associated with intermedia.

The evolution between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* enabled repetitions through a merging of techniques and redeveloped ideas concerning media relay. The removal of detritus onstage in ...*Some trace of her*, including the Foley's bibles that were so significant within *Waves* in marking their interaction with media<sup>167</sup>, exemplifies a development in staging and arguably a shift towards a more proficient filmic display. As seen within the lighting developments that prioritized the actors and thus the images projected onscreen, as well as the use of atmospheric black-and-white relay for the live stream, whilst the technology had not changed between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* the execution of the effects the technology produced altered the aesthetics of the production considerably. The movement in direction towards a photographic approach, mirrored in Warner's appropriated directing titles, further reflects the drive towards iconographic imagery over the pragmatism of shots portrayed in *Waves*. Indeed Warner's concern with the notion of 'dual reality' emphasizes not only his preoccupation with aesthetics but moreover his doubled reality in manipulating various media<sup>168</sup>: both the work of the Foleys onstage as camera operators and the relayed, screened result, thus doubling his influence as both video and photographic director. Likewise, Mitchell's considerations of 'theatrical cubism'<sup>169</sup> encourage the layering of media used in ...*Some trace of her*, where every element of the onstage world is highlighted within the production; thereby echoing my assertion that Mitchell's media productions are

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<sup>167</sup> Whilst the notebooks were not removed entirely, Mitchell and Warner did not insist upon their use onstage, as had been the case throughout *Waves*. Warner discussed how alternatives to the bibles used in *Waves* have now been adopted within Mitchell's media productions, for example through the use of video monitors onstage to digitally inform the Foleys of when to start and stop filming. Warner cites the *Forbidden Zone* (2016) as an example of such a production, to be discussed in detail in chapter five. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>168</sup> Mitchell, K., (2008) ...*Some trace of her*, [programme note].

<sup>169</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

examples of intermedia. Certainly the increased use of the live feed in streaming continuously throughout the production, moved ...*Some trace of her* theoretically towards film rather than a live production in terms of display.

Significantly, the path between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* displays an example of intermedia; where a merging of media is used within each production, but moreover, I argue, the repeated traits within Mitchell's media productions demonstrates intermedia as a developing body of media work. *The Waves* and its adaptation for theatre arguably formed a new mode of performance for Mitchell as she battled to relay the internal monologues of Woolf's characters. Although the use of media fronted Mitchell's next production at the National Theatre, *Attempts on her life*, in returning to the use of one 'source' text, *The Idiot*, ...*Some trace of her* developed upon the techniques initiated in *Waves*. Contrasting with Woolf's text of thoughts and memories that bore Mitchell's fragmentary display in *Waves*, Dostoyevsky's characters are burdened with problematic love triangles<sup>170</sup>, thus the need to portray thoughts is usurped by the need to relate and narrate, altering the use of media and arguably creating a more filmic display as a result. Whilst Mitchell does not consider her work 'film', her various artworks are increasingly driven by technology<sup>171</sup>. Tracing her changing body of performance work, Mitchell's increased use of live streaming documents her moves within media. Although Mitchell acknowledges that 'we evolved this thing'<sup>172</sup>, the essence of the 'thing' continues to develop.

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<sup>170</sup> National Theatre Education, 2008, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>171</sup> *Fifty Nine Productions*, 2009, (accessed: 11/10/16).

<sup>172</sup> Mitchell speaks on the development of *Waves* and arguably the development of her media form. 'That book, *The Waves*, is very good because it's just internal monologues. You know, world wars happen and they don't even get on the radar of the mental structures of any of the characters. It is an incredible novel because of that. And so I then thought about how we communicate, and thought we should try some video and some sound: then we evolved this thing'. Central School of Speech and Drama, 2008, (accessed: 31/08/16).

## **REDEVELOP**

### **REBORN: Doing 'aNTi Live'**

Audience members have been filmed throughout the development of the NT Live project, and their reactions before, during and after performances are streamed along with the production as another part of the 'live' experience. The live audience members arguably enhance the experience for cinema viewers watching the streaming, with laughter, gasps and applause relayed to heighten the drama from stage, on screen. Although the reactions are recorded live, the audience members are projected repeatedly as part of the captured footage, relayed at every subsequent screening across the world. In an article on live streaming by researchers Bernadette Cochrane and Frances Bonner they state that:

Nothing identifies liveness like being there and nothing contradicts it quite so graphically as seeing the back of your own head sitting in an audience in front of you (on the screen) watching a performance that you saw some weeks earlier on the other side of the world.<sup>173</sup>

The anecdote describes an unusual experience, where the individual was equally part of both audiences; captured as a theatre member, whilst being watched by a cinema audience digitally, as well as physically. As Cochrane and Bonner conclude that, 'The deferral of time and place, along with the illusion of simultaneity, decontextualizes performance and disconnects audience

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<sup>173</sup> *Oxford Academic*, 2014, (accessed: 10/04/17).

apprehension of the performance from the site of its reception'<sup>174</sup>, I consider that the disrupted sense of place and time enables a theoretical redevelopment of the concept of 'live' facilitated by streaming in ontologically challenging its nature.

Throughout this chapter I reflect on the notion of time, and its effect upon performance. In *Time: The Modern and Postmodern Experience* (1994) science and technology scholar Helga Nowotny analyses time in relation to physics and the principle of relativity. In a passage highlighting the social misconception of time, Nowotny notes that:

the mast of the clock and the appointments diary ... encourages us to think they embody time which passes without our agency and cannot be arrested. We believe we have to be governed by them, whereas they merely reproduce series of movements which are shaped as symbols in such a way that we are able to orient the coordination of our own activities by them. For it is we human beings who make time.<sup>175</sup>

I interpret Nowotny's version of time as a performance: working as a social construct and an area of movement or play. She acknowledges time as a reproduction of movement and symbols, advocating a relinquishing of agency from entities supposedly embodying time. Nowotny's naming of these entities as governing, and the politics of time, will be analyzed here in the productions of *This House* (2013) and *The Vote* (2015). Playwright James Graham's productions observe time as affecting the life of the government, considering the pressured process of voting and the subsequent time spent in office.

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<sup>174</sup> *Oxford Academic*, 2014, (accessed: 10/04/17).

<sup>175</sup> *Googlebooks*, 2017, (accessed: 10/04/17).



In *Postdramatic Theatre* (2006), Hans-Thies Lehmann writes on the notion of time through an observation of the present as:

... not a reified point of time but, as a perpetual disappearing of this point, it is already a transition and simultaneously a caesura between the past and the future. *The present is necessarily the erosion and slippage of presence*. It denotes an event that empties the now and in this emptiness itself lets memory and anticipation flash up. The present cannot be grasped conceptually but only as a perpetual self-division of the now into ever new splinters of ‘just now’ and ‘in an instant’. It has more to do with death than with the often evoked ‘life’ of theatre [original emphasis] (Lehmann, 2006: 144).

Lehmann evokes a Bergsonian notion of the present as fragments of time; proposing that as each successive part erodes, a new present appears, thereby creating a movement between the past and the present, and the future<sup>176</sup>.

Lehmann’s conclusion that the present has ‘more to do with death than with the often evoked ‘life’ of theatre’ (Lehmann, 2006: 144), presents an interesting binary comparable with the relationship between performance and documentation, which this chapter will address. The plot of *This House* involves

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<sup>176</sup> Lehmann’s discussion on the slippage of time in relation to memory, ‘It denotes an event that empties the now and in this emptiness itself lets memory and anticipation flash up’ (Lehmann, 2006: 144), has been discussed practically as well as theoretically. Scientists have discovered that the brain forms two memories of each event, one held within the short and one within the long term sides of the brain, creating an assemblage of past and present. Previously it was considered that memories were received only in the short term, evolving into long term memories over time. *BBC News*, 2017, (accessed: 10/04/17). See also Kitamura et al, 2017; summarised by reviewer Simon Makin: ‘Tonegawa’s research points to the existence of complementary memory systems: One allows rapid memory formation but has limited capacity, and thus needs to pass information that should be retained to another system that is longer-lasting but slower-acting’. *Scientific America*, 2017, (accessed: 05/07/18).

a year-by-year analysis of the hung Parliament of 1974-1979, where often the Labour majority is maintained by only a single vote. Lehmann's notion of the death of performance is analogous to the demise of the hanging party, where the physical work or labour endured ceases; leading to an eventual rebirth of the Tory party under Margaret Thatcher.

Whilst the House within Graham's production refers to parliament, there is a relationship between the political House on the north bank of the Thames, and the performance house of the National Theatre on the south bank. Graham notes an inspiration for writing as seeing David Hare's *Stuff Happens*, which focused on the Iraq war, presented at the National Theatre in 2004. Graham discusses his interval walk onto the National Theatre's balcony as creating a symbolic unity between the houses on either side of the river<sup>177</sup>. Whilst the narrative of Hare's *Stuff Happens* was contemporaneous, in distinction to the term in office around which *This House* is set, the themes binding performance and politics are repetitious. Graham's *This House* focuses on the seventies coalition government, although the situation was reflected in the more recent unstable Parliament of 2010. Graham notes on the production:

... even though the drama is specific to a particular period in our recent past, I never wanted it to be a museum piece. Instead I hoped to use the period to create something more timeless than that, something more universal, about parliament and democracy (Graham, 2013: x).

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<sup>177</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

The notion of timelessness is of interest when considering politics and performance. Whilst the chapter will highlight historical references such as the signing of the Magna Carta, modern ‘performances’ such as President Donald Trump’s election campaign and beginning period in office have effected the notion of political times. The Doomsday clock for example, a theoretical concept but physically altered by scientists, was moved forward to thirty seconds before midnight after Trump’s first period in office, representing a metaphorical changing of time and ultimately an uncertain future<sup>178</sup>.

The innovative practice of live streaming effects received thoughts concerning the notions of time within performance. *This House*, after moving from the Cottesloe to the Olivier Theatre at the National, was live-streamed in 2013 as part of the fourth NT Live ‘season’. Although the streaming projected the last performance from the National Theatre, 45,000 viewers watched from discrete venues in the United Kingdom, and a further 20,000 viewers watched from overseas, the equivalent of selling out performances for a further five weeks<sup>179</sup>, effectively lengthening the run of the production<sup>180</sup>. As these results were gleaned before later Encore performances, the number of ‘live’ viewers inevitably tallied far higher. In parallel, *The Vote*, which was live screened via television on the night of the 2015 General Election, received 550,000 viewers, with a further 200,000 watching the performance on catch-up services. Despite the temporal specificity of the performance, shown in time with the last ninety

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<sup>178</sup> *The Guardian*, 2017, (accessed: 26/01/17).

<sup>179</sup> The results also indicated that the performance outsold NT Live’s initial output, *Phèdre*, which had reached 50,000 viewers at time of publication, demonstrating the overall development of the NT Live project. *The Guardian*, 2013, (accessed: 29/03/17).

<sup>180</sup> Subsequently in 2016, *This House* played at the Chichester Festival Theatre and transferred to the West End’s Garrick Theatre thereafter.

minutes of public voting thus *in time* with the exact moments in which it was set, nearly a quarter of viewers watched the live performance at a delay, out of time.

This chapter considers the relationship between life and death in regard to politics and performance: I argue that the ‘life’ of performance is extended by *live* streaming, interrupting its passing or death. I suggest that documents inspiring playwright Graham are redeveloped and woven through *This House* as significant motifs; akin to the archives of both Parliament and the National Theatre, resulting in a consideration of the twinned relationship between NT Live and NT Archive termed here as ‘aNTi Live’. The turbulent hung parliament displaying the death of the Labour party is reflected through the deaths of politicians; a concept I relate with Thatcher’s death that fell within the run of *This House* at the Olivier in 2013, analyzed as a metaphorical extension of life, or rebirth, enabled via media. I cite *The Vote* as a redevelopment of *This House* lastly considering the notion of stopping time, as hanging between life and death, unmarked, but a-live.

### *Redevelop*

Graham’s research into parliament facilitated a theatrical redevelopment of key themes and ideas, which enabled political documents to perform anew throughout *This House*. Graham’s use of a chalkboard, where the tally of votes demonstrates the desperation of the Labour party in counting and counting *on* each representative to vote according to party policy, creates a visual aid for the audience during the production. The board works as a document that stands between ‘life’ and ‘death’, rubbed and adjusted constantly, thus echoing the altering state of the party through measuring their current (political)

performance. Throughout the years of the term, ('term' arguably suggesting a sentence as well as a period of time in office), the hanging government struggles to 'stay alive', as each vote is won by the slimmest of majorities<sup>181</sup>. In order to maintain the majority, the Labour Whips source support from the 'odds and sods' (the Welsh, Scots and the Liberals) in order to survive each vote in the House<sup>182</sup>. As the Scots demand votes on devolution, their support is given and withdrawn throughout the production, as they reference the state of both the government and situation, as 'purgatory'<sup>183</sup>. As each year of the coalition is revealed to the audience, political tactics that attempt to lengthen the life of the party are evidenced. Due to inconsistent support through sick Labour members too unwell to present themselves for voting, thoughts of 'pairing' become a necessity. 'Pairing' is discussed in the production as an unofficial agreement where should one member prove unable to vote, a member from the opposition would also be removed from voting to prevent an unfair advantage. As 'pairing' is not listed within Erskine May, an historical document written by a Clerk that details the running of parliament, the Tories announce and renounce 'pairing' throughout the end of the seventies, increasing pressure on Labour members to attend each vote despite ailments and illness in a struggle to survive.

Graham's research demonstrated through *This House* parallels the use of research within the House. The use of Erskine May within the production mirrors its use in parliament, sought as a reference to historical processes in a government where no exact rules on the constitution are written. David Natzler,

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<sup>181</sup> Junior whip Ann Taylor asks, 'Is it enough to stay alive then, three?' *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

<sup>182</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

<sup>183</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

Clerk of the House of Commons, expresses; ‘It is amazing how often we have to turn back to old precedents which may seem dusty and ancient but actually speak to us today’<sup>184</sup>. Whilst Graham’s characters refer to Erskine May, the document performs not only in the production to aid politicians; but moreover references contemporary uses of the book, redeveloping its status as both historical past whilst simultaneously present, and future. Similarly, Graham’s pursuit of archival material demonstrates further redevelopments. Whilst private notebooks revealed the decision on ‘pairing’, thus its inclusion within *This House*, the Whips are not permitted to speak in the chamber and are advised not to document their knowledge for the sake of the party, even after leaving politics. Graham notes that upon publication of Gyles Brandreth’s diaries, former Conservative Member of Parliament, a card with a marked black spot was posted through his letterbox<sup>185</sup>. Graham, considering the lack of written information on political endeavours upon which to write *This House*, expresses:

I confess, I thought it might be simpler. I thought for example, that there might be one, single resource in the House that listed what Members of Parliament died of, when and how. Perhaps documents that chronicled the exact statistical nature of how the government kept, lost, regained, lost again its majority in parliament, which members were responsible, when, and how. There (to the best of my knowledge) isn’t (Graham, 2013: viii).

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<sup>184</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 24/02/15).

<sup>185</sup> See *Breaking the Code: The Brandreth Diaries: Westminster Diaries, 1992-97*. Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

As documents were not available, Graham began interviewing: ‘I was a magpie, using the help and wisdom of those who know better, to pool all this information’ (Graham, 2013: viii). In another anecdote, Graham reveals that a meeting with Ann Taylor, a junior Whip through 1974-1979, produces a vital line for the production, in that she recalled her exact wording allowing Graham to redevelop previous recollections on the incident<sup>186</sup>. Graham’s pursuing of Taylor’s fellows throughout the research process and into rehearsals allowed him to redevelop his ideas also<sup>187</sup>, with the playwright noting that, ‘I kept returning to the facts again and again, even as rehearsals began, to keep topping myself up, taking in more, immersing myself within it’ (Graham, 2013: ix)<sup>188</sup>. In this regard the documentation surrounding the production directly informed the content of the performance, but also developed itself, redeveloped when needed by Graham. Effectively, as the ‘life’ of the documents continues, so too does the sense of liveness evoked; thereby challenging the concept of documents as an endpoint of research and marking their presence as performance.

Whilst specialist language was used with the production, evidenced within the programme for the NT Live screenings where a glossary of key political terms was included; Graham aimed for the script to be non-specific and ‘durable’, believing that the period could work as an analogy for further redevelopments. Upon moving from the Cottesloe and transferring to the Olivier Theatre, alterations to the script were required to make sense of entrances, exits and adapting to the new staging space. As a result, the publication of the script

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<sup>186</sup> Graham notes that the influence of Taylor permitted his writing to document more exactly, and present a more truthful version therefore than originally intended or envisaged. *SoundCloud*, 2013, (accessed: 27/08/16).

<sup>187</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

<sup>188</sup> Director Jeremy Herrin declares Graham as a ‘walking encyclopedia’ of political knowledge. *SoundCloud*, 2013, (accessed: 27/08/16).

sold at the Cottesloe changed, the publication of *This House* found within Graham's collection of plays is a redeveloped version from the run housed at the Olivier, rather than the Cottesloe. After time at Chichester Festival Theatre, *This House* returned to the West End for a run at the Garrick Theatre four years after its premier at the National Theatre. Although Graham had needed to alter his script between venues at the National Theatre for the sake of sense, the run at the Garrick Theatre presented a new period in history. Whilst Graham attempted to redevelop the script once again, this time in order to reflect the current political situation, he found this process too challenging and the document has since remained unaltered<sup>189</sup>. In demonstrating the politics of the seventies, associations with the last coalition government are inferred, and according to Graham, references such as the possibility of a Scottish devolution are inextricably bound within our most current political situation and fragile government, marking the production as current despite these *unmarked*, contemporary references.

#### 'aNTi Live'

Graham considers a central character of *This House* as the House itself<sup>190</sup>: a performer that documents its history; within its walls, the building works as a living archive. Repeated acts working as performances occur through the procedures and ceremonies displayed; for example at the annual state opening of Parliament, where the lighting is rigged so that no shadows fall upon the fully lit Queen as she appears centre stage. On other occasions, lighting is used to diminish interest in certain features; upon a visit from a French President a painting depicting Lord Nelson and the Battle of Waterloo were left in an unlit

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<sup>189</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

<sup>190</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.



gloom<sup>191</sup>. Commemorations of major historic events are also held at Westminster Hall, including a staging of German and English choirs, echoed within the building itself through the relic of the half arch that survived bombing of the chamber during World War II<sup>192</sup>. Such events involve rehearsal, with the politicians and officials acting as performers also, playing a ‘star role’ ‘for the piece of theatre’ on the ‘stage’ that is Parliament<sup>193</sup>.

The history of the Houses demonstrates both the advantages and disadvantages of living with relics. Whilst nostalgia dictates it impressive that a tennis ball served in Henry VIII’s reign is still held within the rafters<sup>194</sup>, work required on the roof is evidently long overdue<sup>195</sup>. In a series of documentaries intended to reveal the workings of parliament, it was reported that, ‘Parts of the Palace of Westminster are so badly affected by asbestos, fragile stonework and ageing electrics and wiring, it has been said the Grade I-listed building would be knocked down if it was not protected’<sup>196</sup>. Elsewhere a report commissioned on the state of Parliament noted that a major fire could ensue due to an unsafe infrastructure, with Lord Lisvane, the former most senior Commons official noting that, “‘All of the facilities, whether it’s electricity, IT, comms, sewage, fresh water, high pressure steam, central heating, all of that, have just been laid one over the other’”<sup>197</sup>. The Houses, in a palimpsestic layering of history, are founded on detritus and deposits from previous political eras, with the ‘fragile’ and ‘ageing’<sup>198</sup> past calling into question the future work that can be achieved

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<sup>191</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 12/02/15).

<sup>192</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 12/02/15); *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>193</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 12/02/15).

<sup>194</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 12/02/15).

<sup>195</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 17/02/15).

<sup>196</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>197</sup> *BBC News*, 2016, (accessed: 08/09/16).

<sup>198</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

within the building. The House, protected by its place in history, in turn protects its ‘lives’, with each layer a persistent document of its era in a performance that refuses to end.

Whilst the building documents, the documents inside the building display the performances held within the chamber. The archives, described as a quiet place for thinking within *This House*, contain over one million bills and acts of Parliament that detail the working processes of British politics<sup>199</sup>. The meaning of the archive, or *arkhe*, is described by Derrida as commandment or commencement:

This name apparently coordinates two principles in one: the principle according to nature or history, *there* where things *commence* – physical, historical, or ontological principle – but also the principle according to the law, *there* where men and gods *command*, there where authority, social order are exercised, *in this place* from which *order* is given [original emphasis] (Derrida, 1995: 1).

Derrida’s analysis of the archive is analogous to the Houses: it is in that place from which order is both commanded, through acts such as the state opening of Parliament; and commences, through the writing of bills that dictate law, and thus order, in the country. As is noted within *This House*, the capitulation of Charles I to government, and his later execution, which both occurred in the Houses (the Banqueting House), enabled a distribution of power from the state, an historical act that presented an ontological shift for government and

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<sup>199</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

governance. Indeed, Derrida's citing of the Greek *arkheion* associates the archive with domesticity, a giving of power to the house. He describes the *arkheion* as:

initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the *archons*, those who commanded. The citizens who thus held and signified political power were considered to possess the right to make or to represent the law. On account of their publically recognized authority, it is at their home, in that *place* which is their house ... that official documents are filed [...] Entrusted to such archons, these documents in effect speak the law [original emphasis] (Derrida, 1995: 2)

The idea that documents 'speak' is of interest when considering the life of the archive. If considered as a depository of laws that have been passed, the documents once filed and archived are effectively 'housed'. Derrida's suggestion here that the documents 'speak' provides a redeveloped sense of life or activity, inferring that the archives are not containers of documents but rather housing performing documents. I have noted previously that 'these documents ... are both documentation of a process but also potentially performances in and of themselves, with the ability to be recalled, reused, rewritten at any point, themselves on the brink of life and death' (Read, 2014: 70).

The 'life' and 'death' of documents within the archives of Parliament have been altered by the addition of technology, affecting the traditional processes of documentation. Whilst vellum is still used to document bills, put to the vote twice within recent years with politicians opting to continue using animal skin archives and thereby mirroring the material of historical documents

such as the Magna Carta<sup>200</sup>; elsewhere in the Houses, digital files are increasingly replacing paper formats. In 2015 it was reported that 18 million printed pages are produced from the Houses every year; these documents include dialogue such as Prime Minister's Questions and every word noted whilst the chamber is in session, contained in the record book, the Hansard. In September 2015 it was decided that the Hansard would be stored on digital file, rather than documented as a paper copy, with other files also digitized, in an attempt to save approximately £800,000 per annum<sup>201</sup>. Likewise, paper copies of proposed bills delivered from the House of Commons to the House of Lords, traditionally walked from one House to another, are now additionally sent in digital format<sup>202</sup>. Arguably amendments to such bills that move between the two Houses, or recalled bills, pulled from the archives, would be more efficiently sourced from a digital file, although lessening the use of traditional documents in order to lengthen the life of the current parliament.

The use of digital files as affecting house archives has altered the National Theatre's repository also, producing what I interpret as a theoretical clashing between NT Archive and NT Live. *This House* was live-streamed by NT Live, and received two camera rehearsals ahead of the performance. In a similar vein to the edited writing and continuous research of Graham, these camera rehearsals prove effective as tools to develop the best possible shots for cinema audiences. The shots generated at these rehearsals inevitably produce surplus footage, as scenes are altered, theoretically working between life and death as they are improved and disregarded, or potentially recalled, throughout the process. Despite the markings laid to ensure that cameras follow the decided

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<sup>200</sup> *BBC News*, 2016, (accessed: 15/02/16).

<sup>201</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>202</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

pattern of filming, the shots screened to cinema audiences are gathered at the time of recording, rather than pre-recorded during the camera rehearsals. *This House* required the use of six cameras for the live screening: two were fixed whilst two were tracking cameras, accompanied by a crane and a Steadicam. A reviewer noted the complications of handling the output in real or *reel* time: ‘This House has about 1,000 shots. He [camera director Tim van Someren] works from two broadcast vans parked outside the National. The cameramen are directed from here; the six feeds, 16 microphones and the soundtrack are mixed together, and subtitles are added – all live’<sup>203</sup>. Whilst there is ‘live’ digital mixing of shots and edits that occur efficiently within the NT Live productions, the recorded elements produced from each performance, including the footage generated prior to screening, combine to ‘document’ each performance.

In spite of their usefulness as documentation of process and output, NT Live screenings were originally omitted from the NT Archives. The NT Archives are filled with material from over fifty years of productions, such as bibles, notes on set and staging, costume designs and programmes. Significantly, each production is currently filmed for the sake of posterity from three cameras; stage left, right and centre as a pan shot, that when combined create filmed footage that can be viewed at the archive by researchers and members of the public. As if insisting, as the title indicates, that the screenings were (NT) *live*, the recordings of performances were not held within the house archives; arguably because such a move would question the status of the live recording. Whilst NT Archives now contain NT Live performances, with Victoria Murray<sup>204</sup>, former Marketing

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<sup>203</sup> *The Guardian*, 2013, (accessed: 29/03/17).

<sup>204</sup> Private interview, Murray, V., 01/03/13.

Manager suggesting that their earlier omission was due to the newness of the venture and practical rather than tactical purposes, I consider that the ‘in between’, blurred zone of live and archive, performance and document, presents an example of an ‘unmarked liveness’, or to specify my theory here, a movement towards ‘aNTi Live’. I want to argue that the National Theatre’s archives and live streaming facilities have presented a case for the metaphorical area between the life and death of the ‘live’ archive to occur, creating a situation of never-not live: ‘aNTi Live’.

### *Reborn*

The morality of politicians is a concern addressed in *This House*. John Stonehouse, a central Labour Whip in the 1970s, felt unbearable stress and pressure within his life and apparently drowned himself, leaving only his clothes as evidence of his passing. Although *This House* re-enacts Stonehouse’s suicide, illness and deaths are constantly highlighted within the production, reflecting in physical terms Labour’s battle to stay alive politically. *This House* depicts the desperation of drastically sick politicians struggling to make each vote, on occasion ‘chopped in’ to maintain their slim majority. As one politician nearly died in the chamber after the Tories refused ‘pairing’, it was decided that the agreement should be reinstated. After much anxiety, a chief Labour Whip departs, with his replacement left to learn the news that Stonehouse’s suicide was faked, a lifeline used in order to escape troubles rather than a longing for death<sup>205</sup>. Martin Horwood, a Liberal politician, noted that ‘I think all of us know we’re mortal in political terms’, speaking with regards to the balancing act

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<sup>205</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

presented by swing states that have the potential to oust party members at any election<sup>206</sup>. As described in *This House*, a total of seventeen Labour politicians lost their life during the hanging years<sup>207</sup>. Whilst the party slowed to its demise, a cultural death along with the death of the political left would ensue during the rise of the new era: Thatcher's Tory government of the eighties.

The political rise, and eventual death, of Thatcher affected Graham's documenting, writing and portrayal of *This House*. The production, through showing the demise and gradual death of the Labour party, infers the rise of Thatcherism, on the horizon throughout<sup>208</sup>. Despite the beginning of her rise indicated within the production, Thatcher's death fell on a night where *This House* was playing at the National Theatre in 2013. Playwright Graham, in speaking about the event, recalled that other West End productions were equally affected by the death that had the potential to stop live performances. Indeed, Graham notes that *The Audience*, a National Theatre production on tour, chose to remove Thatcher's scenes from the performance shown on the night of her death. Elsewhere on the same night, *Billy Elliot* allowed the audience to vote on proceedings, with the decision made to proceed unaltered. Similarly, Graham, director Jeremy Herrin and Nicholas Hytner, Head of the National Theatre in 2013, considered removing scenes, omitting mention of Finchley (Thatcher's constituency) from dialogue, or beginning with an address to the audience.

Significantly, sixty Tory MPs who were present during the 1974-1979 term had

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<sup>206</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 24/02/15).

<sup>207</sup> I have intentionally chosen not to describe the murder of Jo Cox (Labour's former Batley and Spen representative) with regards to the life and death of MPs. Although an example of the morality of a politician, who was performing her public duty at the time of her murder and died due to political angst, I feel that it would be disrespectful to compare Cox's death with other historical events. Whilst I do not intend to undermine the deaths of the Labour politicians who served during the seventies, the nature and timing of Cox's death in relation to this thesis, and the inevitable comparison with now dramatized events such as the faked suicide of Stonehouse, would potentially lessen the significance of the attack.

<sup>208</sup> *YouTube*, 2013, (accessed: 07/04/17).

been invited to the performance to sit in the ‘House’; the seats of the commons displayed onstage, usually occupied by members of the public during the run. Although Graham recalls that every politician attended, he notes that the production felt unusually quiet, as if presenting a ‘different show’<sup>209</sup>.

The decision to proceed and feature Thatcher’s voice within *This House* created an uncanny sense of rebirth after her death, enabled via live streaming. The voiceover, occurring towards the end of the production that delivers a sense of relief and calm for the Labour Whips suggesting that harmony will follow the political and societal discord of the seventies; echoes as a reincarnation in the production. Thatcher, as though prevented from passing with the title NT Live arguably working as a reminder of the fact, was reborn via screenings. The Australian showings for example, delivered weeks after the live transmission from London, are equally termed as NT Live, despite their temporal distance at up to six weeks removed from the initial showing at the National Theatre. The difference between real time and reel time means that whilst the news of Thatcher’s death was archival material in London, her arguable (NT) Live presence afforded by the National Theatre enabled an overcoming of death, her documented self to speak again in a disconcerting rebirth as part of the Australian screenings<sup>210</sup>.

In another parallel between the Houses, the live streaming of parliament arguably channels a lifeline, preventing the metaphorical ‘death’ of the government. The twenty-four hour ‘live’ broadcasts featured on BBC Parliament

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<sup>209</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

<sup>210</sup> Graham considers that the NT Live productions of *This House* permitted a rebirth of Thatcher, although considers that when the production moved to the Garrick Theatre, as if providing closure, there was a shift in the production. He argues that the focus of *This House*, reflecting contemporary politics, now speaks more on the fragile current situation of government, rather than the marks left by Thatcherism. Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.



act as a national ‘theatre’ *live*, enabling viewers greater access into the life of the House, a key concern when considering the establishment of NT Live (Barker, 2013: 31). In addition to the House archives, the footage gathered by the BBC arguably documents as well as performs, recording events ‘live’<sup>211</sup>. As noted within *This House*, mentioned as a demand as well as a determined theme, ‘Nobody dies in the Palace of Westminster’<sup>212</sup>, BBC Parliament’s and NT Live’s streaming create a performance, that is ‘live, or almost live’; a simultaneous live performance and documented archive, to be recalled through media channels, or through encores as with Graham’s production<sup>213</sup>.

The nature of NT Live’s screenings as performance and document enables their replaying through encores, presenting a reborn liveness for the performances through their commoditization. The screenings, as both NT Live and Encore, generate high income for the National Theatre, with a report from March 2017 suggesting that NT Live had drawn over 1.3 million viewers since its inception in 2009<sup>214</sup>. NT Live can be attributed with driving a surge towards theatre if not to the physical House itself; a trend that can occur due to the rebirth of performances, as recorded documents whilst predicated upon live outputs.

Arguably though, NT Live has potentially pulled audiences away from the beacon venue with the increased availability to see performances locally, at

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<sup>211</sup> It has been stated that there are severe restrictions on what is shown to the public through news channels, hence a use of editing that questions the ‘live’ nature of *BBC Parliament. iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>212</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12. The maxim echoes the sentiments of Ernst Kantorowicz’s *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*, originally published in 1957. The difference between the monarch and monarchy are discussed in relation to the two bodies of the King, epitomised in a phrase such as, ‘The King is dead! Long live the King’; demonstrated further through the naming of Kantorowicz’s chapter, ‘The King Never Dies’. The continual rule of power is evident within both Kantorowicz’s and Graham’s work.

<sup>213</sup> Emma Freud provided this ‘disclaimer’ as she presented the pre-show footage for NT Live’s screening of *She Stoops to Conquer*, presented in the third year of NT Live’s development, a ‘season’ before the screening of *This House*. *She stoops to conquer*, By Goldsmith, O., (Dir.) Lloyd, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 31/01/12.

<sup>214</sup> *The Guardian*, 2013, (accessed: 29/03/17).

discrete venues and convenient times. Through NT Live's versatility, cinema has arguably undermined the nature of the theatrical display in facilitating a feeling of liveness despite lack of co-temporality or co-presence<sup>215</sup>. Martin Barker, writing on the case of live streaming in 2013, notes that the cinema showings work as, if not substitutes, then replacements for viewers that are satisfactory, hence their popularity (Barker, 2013: 68). As reports have considered the death of theatre<sup>216</sup>, brought about by the rise in cinema as advocated by the NT Live project, the life of the National Theatre arguably rests on their relayed performances thereby working between 'life' and 'death' in extending the (NT) *live* display. I have noted regarding NT Live that 'through theatre's relationship with digital performance and its 'in house' relationship to live cinema screenings, theatre may be prevented from its own untimely death' (Read, 2014: 75).

*Redeveloped: from live streaming to live screening*

Playwright Graham redeveloped the concept of live streaming his performances, as well as the themes depicted within *This House*, to create a live-screened programme for television, *The Vote*. *The Vote* was transmitted to television sets on the night of the 2015 General Election and was set in real time showing the last ninety minutes of public voting, from half past eight until ten o'clock in the evening. *The Vote* was the 'first play broadcast during the exact time it was set'<sup>217</sup>, creating a contemporaneous narrative, arguably working as an 'enhanced'

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<sup>215</sup> See Auslander, P., (2012) 'Digital liveness: A historico-philosophical perspective', *PAJ A Journal of Performance and Art*, 34 (3) pp. 3-11. Auslander's revised proposal on liveness suggests that digital performances need not have a sense of co-presence or co-temporality to be interpreted as 'live'.

<sup>216</sup> NESTA, 2014, (accessed: 10/06/15).

<sup>217</sup> *Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 10/04/17).

live. The decision to transmit live via television heightens the sense of liveness; Graham notes that the idea of streaming directly into the homes of viewers created a sense of ‘penetration’ and intimacy not achievable through cinema screening<sup>218</sup>. Graham’s work was intended to communicate directly with voters in an artistic, rather than media driven, response to political debate<sup>219</sup>.

Whilst *This House* is concerned with debates from the chamber and the Whips office in distinction with the polling station that functions as centre stage during *The Vote*, there are similarities between Graham’s plays, illustrating the development of not only Graham’s writing and documenting, but moreover the tensions created by politics. Graham’s focus upon the lesser known characters within *This House* and his desire to translate the tales of the humans behind the walls of Westminster are related to the central characters of *The Vote*; the polling attendants who suffer great strains on election day to ensure fair play, as well as election night when transporting the ballot box for counting<sup>220</sup>. *The Vote* focused upon three levels of public within the play: those working in an official capacity although a non-governmental role as polling officers, the public who attend the polling station to vote, and additionally the public watching the play at the Donmar Warehouse Theatre; depicted for the television audience via the use of cameras that surround the theatre in a round. In representing those who represent ‘us’ at the polling station, *The Vote* works as an example of theatre within the

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<sup>218</sup> *The Vote* was a success and has been reported as the single largest night of theatre shown on television. Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

<sup>219</sup> Graham notes that for the first time, due to a change in legislation, the day of the general election was provided to public well in advance of lobbying. In this regard, Graham and director of the Donmar Warehouse, Josie Rourke, could plan a performance to address the vote, during the time of voting and thus before the announcement of results. Whereas Graham’s *This House* responded to politics in an aftermath or as a reflection upon procedures, the notion of simultaneity between performance and actual events was enabled through the changes in legislation, and facilitated practically via the use of live screening. Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

<sup>220</sup> Graham speaks on his quest to display the back stage lives of parliament through his portrayal of characters in *This House*. *SoundCloud*, 2013, (accessed: 27/08/16).

theatre, a redeveloped notion for Graham, established within *This House* where the use of audience onstage acting as politicians in the chamber demonstrates another analogy of representation; the elected politicians sitting for ‘us’ ensuring a decent stage upon which to debate matters that affect society.

The notions of a performance of politics are emphasized within the narrative of *The Vote*, as developed within *This House* previously. A voiceover announces ahead of the live screening:

Its 8.28 on election night ... a peculiar ritual is being performed ... onstage at the Donmar Warehouse Theatre, the clock is also ticking ... Its set at this hour, on this day ... the curtain will fall and the country will have spoken (*The Vote*, 2015).

The concept of a ritual here is of significance in addressing both political and theatrical traditions; with a link forged between voting and performance through the dropping of the stage curtain. A voter within the play visits the polling station after attending a recital, where another comparison is made between the acts of performing and voting. The voter considers that whilst much time is spent preparing for a performance such as a recital, the event itself is gone in minutes, in a similar situation to the process of voting. He notes also that with only ten or so votes or ‘performances’ in a lifetime, the likelihood of making a difference is slim. The polling officer, in an ironic note from Graham, retorts, ‘except this isn’t really a performance, is it?’ (*The Vote*, 2015). Elsewhere an independent candidate enters the polling station to vote, noting that the announcement of the results is ‘my favourite bit actually, standing on the stage’ (*The Vote*, 2015).

Somewhat factual, as Deputy Speaker Lindsay Hoyle notes that, ‘politicians are budding thespians ... they all want to be on that stage and they all want to play that part’, the relationship between the Houses of Parliament and Theatre, politics and performance as identified within *This House* are redeveloped within *The Vote*<sup>221</sup>.

A recurring narrative within *The Vote* involves confusion between ballot papers, highlighting the relationship between documentation, in this case serving as evidence of an act, and performance, the staged ritual of voting. An inebriated man enters the polling station and requests his ballot paper in order to cast his vote. However upon receiving the document, he removes his paper from the hall in order to consider his selection carefully back at the pub. The polling officers declare that the documents, despite being registered to every individual, are the property of Parliament and the police are called in order to confiscate the paper, which returns complete with a pint glass ring (*The Vote*, 2015). The polling officer, reflecting Graham’s obsession with facts and procedures<sup>222</sup>, informs the audience that unused papers are destroyed and spoiled papers cannot be cast; indeed another voter marks an incorrect cross and a specific ballot paper is required to amend the vote. Whilst a third voter, an elderly man, announces that he has managed to vote twice, the polling officers comment upon the use of paper and pencils to vote, noting that one of the most established democracies in the world is still struggling with HB pencils. As the Tory candidate enters the polling station to cast his vote, noticing that he was missing from his usual registration area as he has changed address, he comments upon the fragility of

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<sup>221</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>222</sup> Private interview, Graham, J., 10/03/17.

the system; that a piece of paper may cause a dramatic episode to occur, or rather that the document could inspire a remarkable performance within the Houses.

The pressure of time and its effect upon political procedures is emphasized within both *This House* and *The Vote*. As the bells of Big Ben mark the end of voting time, a disgruntled member of the public acts fraudulently, posting her paper in the box at the polling station. In *This House*, Graham writes on the sudden stopping of Big Ben's clock, which had previously survived Germany's bombing in World War II<sup>223</sup>. Whilst the clock, along with the Ayrton Light that shines to indicate that parliament is in session, are serviced systematically due to maintenance and resetting<sup>224</sup>, the occurrence in the seventies marked a metaphorical halting of office. Despite Graham reminding the audience that each term lasts only five years, with no clock as a regulator, time becomes all the more abstracted as a concept. The clockmaker, questioned on the damage to the clock during the second act of *This House*, observes that time will be needed for a significant repair. It is noted with irony that parliament does not have time<sup>225</sup>; given the pressures on the Labour government to pass bills and maintain a majority rule under an already strained system. Although the Labour party struggled to pass bills and legislation during the 1974-1979 term in office, with Graham acknowledging that *This House* is essentially about the great efforts required to do so<sup>226</sup>, time is a still weapon within modern-day politics<sup>227</sup>.

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<sup>223</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 17/02/15).

<sup>224</sup> Due to temperature and barometric pressure the clock's pendulum begins to alter time, over time. The resetting of the clock is a ritualistic performance. Pre-decimal pennies are added or removed by the mechanics to increase or decrease the speed of the pendulum, where each coin adds 2/5ths of a second per day. The adding and removal of the pennies has taken place for 150 years. *BBC news*, 2015, (accessed: 26/08/15). It has recently been reported however that major works are required on Big Ben, stopping time in a parallel with the 1974-1979 term in office. *BBC News*, 2016, (accessed: 24/06/16).

<sup>225</sup> *This House*, By Graham, J., (Dir.) Herrin, J., London: Olivier National Theatre, date of performance: 18/09/12.

<sup>226</sup> *SoundCloud*, 2013, (accessed: 27/08/16).

Filibustering, the out-talking of bills within the chamber, prevents a vote being passed on a bill, as ‘the allotted time for a bill runs out’<sup>228</sup>. With ‘plans thwarted by the ticking clock’<sup>229</sup>, the pressure of the Labour party in maintaining order without Big Ben is as important as its chiming to mark the end of the election campaign during *The Vote*. With the added strain of live screening *The Vote*, and the need to stop *on* time and *in* time for election night coverage, the pressure of political times affect the times of performance.

This chapter has focused upon the ‘life’ and ‘death’ of performance, looking particularly at Graham’s plays; highlighting a comparison with historical and modern politics, as well as an analysis of the concept of time. I suggest that the ‘life’ of performance is extended via *live* streaming, preventing its passing and enabling a metaphorical rebirth through the use of technology. Graham’s two performances cited, the live-streamed and live-screened plays *This House* and *The Vote*, work as examples of plays oscillating between metaphorical and literal instances of life and death, shown through their themes and presentation. *This House*, arguably a redeveloped version of Graham’s previous plays such as *Little Madam*, based on the life of Thatcher (Graham, 2013: viii), was created through the revival of documents. Graham’s research enabled him to reconsider historical tales and develop them to speak anew, reflecting current political situations through a rebirth of the past. Although Graham’s research proved difficult, in that the Whips on whom *This House* is based are prevented from discussing politics within the chamber or socially, his pursuit mirrors the endeavours of the contemporary Whips and Clerks, who refer to aging documents, redeveloping

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<sup>227</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 17/02/15).

<sup>228</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 12/02/15).

<sup>229</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 17/02/15).

their sense of purpose and lengthening their life within the House. I consider that the use and disuse of documents in Parliament's archives resembles the use of the archives housed at the National Theatre. A version of *This House*, recorded live as part of the fourth NT Live 'season', is stored within the archives; in comparison with earlier live-streamed performances, which were originally not part of the collection. Whilst early performances are now held alongside current productions due to the firmer establishment of the NT Live project, I argue that the addition of technology, specifically streaming, has altered the relationships between NT Live and NT Archives, where the recordings held within the archives are arguably akin with the recordings screened as 'live' performances shown at cinemas around the World. The screening of BBC Parliament, showcasing the House as a performance space, echoes the idea that technology has altered the performance's relationship with documentation, ontologically altering the 'life' and 'death' of performance. Whilst *This House* references the rise of Thatcherism in the eighties, the death and uncanny rebirth of Thatcher were highlighted by the persistence of *live* streaming, emphasizing also the seventeen deaths suffered by the Labour party during the term in which they hung.

I consider *The Vote* as a redevelopment of *This House*, illustrating the pressures of time through the last ninety minutes of voting documented. Although *The Vote* is set within a polling station rather than the Whips office within parliament, Graham's comparison with theatre and politics continues, as hopeful MPs speak of their desire to stand on the stage as the results are announced. As with *This House*, the emphasis upon archival documents to inform our lack of written constitution is highlighted, with confusion over ballot



papers subsuming the narrative. Big Ben sounds at the end of the play echoing not only the strain of time, but also the desire of the voters still desperate to submit their cards during the dying seconds of the play in an attempt to stop time. Despite *The Vote* being live screened *in* time, alongside the last ninety minutes of voting for the 2015 General Election, almost a third of viewers watched the play via catch-up services, questioning the stated liveness of the performance.

Conservative Jacob Rees-Mogg describes Prime Minister's Questions, shown live via BBC Parliament, as 'the theatre of politics'<sup>230</sup>. In May 2017, after a call by Prime Minister Theresa May for a snap election, government was suspended after Prime Minister's Questions. As media noted 'an abrupt end', the official term, 'prorogued', bills and possible legislation expired ahead of June's General Election<sup>231</sup>. The government had run out of time: the 'performance' ended, and the life of the current term was cut short by a decision on Brexit cast a year earlier. In a period of uncertainty, reflecting the end of the Labour party's reign over the country in 1979 that brought about the rise of Thatcherism, a rebirth is required. Through the prolonging of death, arguably endured through the replacement of David Cameron with May in 2016 and continuing the dialogue that prevented a union with Europe, Britain stopped. The ties cut from Europe, after the triggering of an article never intended for use, marks a road, unmarked. As with the emergence of the NT Live project, that caused concern in that the death of theatre was a possible outcome inspired through a rebirth of cinema, the redevelopment of both forms ensued. David Wiles, in a consideration of time, notes that, 'today it is perhaps our social experience of

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<sup>230</sup> *iPlayer*, 2015, (accessed: 10/02/15).

<sup>231</sup> *BBC News*, 2017, (accessed: 25/04/17).

time that most requires to be understood' (Wiles, 2014: 11). The abstracted concept, highlighted within the performance of politics, and politics yet to be documented, requires a rebirth, a redevelopment.

## REGENERATE

### RELIVE: The war and Europe

Katie Mitchell was theatrically exiled, and in 2011 resigned from the National Theatre, as well as most work in the nation's theatres altogether<sup>232</sup>. Mitchell formed an alliance with Europe, considering that 'another career' or 'brand' was needed.<sup>233</sup> Establishing more concretely her media work, she has transformed operas into large-scale digital performances, demonstrating not only Mitchell's adeptness as a director, but her increasing significance in producing performances too costly to fund in the United Kingdom<sup>234</sup>. Reflecting on her current role, Mitchell considers that she works a mixing board: eyes closed, she mimes tweaking a button to her left, a switch to her right, blending her outputs until the desired effect is achieved<sup>235</sup>. Mastering her productions, she now wears a 'business shield', in the form of Katie Mitchell Ltd<sup>236</sup>, evidence of her previous "dysfunctional" artistic relationship and marking a strategic approach to current work<sup>237</sup>. After the war, Mitchell returned from Europe regenerated.

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<sup>232</sup> *The Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>233</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

<sup>234</sup> Mitchell hypothesized that the few examples of her media work reaching the United Kingdom since 2011 have been selected due to budgets, rather than artistic endeavours (Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16), a claim reinforced: 'She [Mitchell] was ... forced out of this country by ... a lack of organisational support, fleeing to Europe to make ambitious work, most of which hasn't even made it back to Britain – not even at the Barbican Centre. Those pesky Europeans and their pesky proper arts funding', *The Stage*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>235</sup> Mitchell's mime was played during a directing workshop, referencing her delegation of work, something that she advocated to the less established directors present. (Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16).

<sup>236</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

<sup>237</sup> Mitchell recalls her working relationship with previous director of the National Theatre, Nicholas Hytner. The breakdown of the relationship prompted Mitchell's resignation and move to Europe, *The Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

Despite Mitchell's success abroad, she was reportedly “‘very uncomfortable coming back’” to the United Kingdom<sup>238</sup>. Few media works were presented during her ‘exile’, although two significant performances were shown at the Barbican Centre: *Fraulein Julie* (2013) and a live-streamed version of the *Forbidden Zone*<sup>239</sup> (2014), furthering Mitchell's claim that the National Theatre are disinterested in broadcasting her work<sup>240</sup>. Possibly dissuading Mitchell from producing media work at the National Theatre, current director Rufus Norris invited her to direct Sarah Kane's challenging text, *Cleansed*, in 2016. Three weeks after the first showing of *Cleansed*, the Barbican represented the *Forbidden Zone*, albeit regenerated as a ‘live’ staged, rather than ‘live’ streamed performance. This chapter will highlight the theoretical confusion regarding the ontological integrity of the ‘live’ performance: I am interested in the notion of reliving, exemplified in both the form and content of the *Forbidden Zone*. Considering Mitchell's relationship with both Europe and the United Kingdom<sup>241</sup>, I will consider the historical importance between the two areas, juxtaposing with my concept of the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’. I will lastly consider the regeneration of performance, demonstrated both practically and theoretically through Mitchell's work as director.

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<sup>238</sup> *The Stage*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>239</sup> Two varying titles have been given to the production: *The Forbidden Zone*, Barbican, 2016, (accessed: 25/01/17) and *Forbidden Zone*, *Fifty Nine Productions*, 2014, (accessed: 30/08/15). In an attempt to reflect the intent of the company whilst acknowledging the venue where I witnessed the performance, I shall refer to the production as ‘the *Forbidden Zone*’ throughout, as a hopeful compromise.

<sup>240</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13; Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

<sup>241</sup> Reflecting upon her position as an international director, Mitchell states: “‘I really feel that I'm part of a much bigger community and that involvement means I have a much wider spectrum of choices as an artist. I understand my field in a deeper way, too, because I understand it not just in terms of one country, but in terms of the relationships between them, historical as much as artistic. The privilege of that is unbelievable’”, *The Stage*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

The *Forbidden Zone* was devised as part of 14-18 NOW, a project created to commemorate the centenary of the First World War<sup>242</sup>. Based on Fritz Haber's development of chlorine gas that caused devastation during this time, the production highlights the implications of the invention; specifically its effect upon Haber's relationship with his wife, Clara Immerwahr, who publically committed suicide in 1915 in protest against her husband's work<sup>243</sup>. Her suicide is juxtaposed theatrically with the suicide of Haber's granddaughter, Claire, who died in 1949 whilst attempting to find an antidote to the poisonous gas<sup>244</sup>. In order to theoretically question the notion of reliving, evidenced within the *Forbidden Zone* through the paralleled lives of Clara and Claire, I will reference Rebecca Schneider's considerations in *Performance remains: art and war in times of theatrical reenactment* (2011). Schneider notes:

In the syncopated time of reenactment, when *then* and *now* punctuate each other, reenactors in art and war romance and/or battle an "other" time and try to bring that time - that prior movement - to the very fingertips of the present [original emphasis] (Schneider, 2011: 2)

Schneider's emphasis on the concept of times punctuating one another are displayed onstage via the contrasting shots of Clara and Claire, to be discussed in detail later in the chapter. Whilst historically separated, the emotional battles faced unite the women within the *Forbidden Zone*<sup>245</sup>. Schneider's writing

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<sup>242</sup> Barbican, 2016, (accessed: 25/01/17).

<sup>243</sup> *Fifty Nine Productions*, 2014, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>244</sup> 14-18 NOW, 2014, (accessed: 25/01/17).

<sup>245</sup> A third time period is highlighted within the *Forbidden Zone*, channeled through a fellow scientist working with Claire Haber. To be discussed, the audience witness recollections of the

focuses here on war reenactors and their pursuits in bringing the past to the ‘fingertips of the present’: ‘... for them [reenactors], linear time is a ruse. As if having it both ways, or many ways at once, reenactors take the “past” in multiple directions ... repetition trips into something entirely outside of linear, narrative time ...’ (Schneider, 2011: 26). I am interested in the ‘multiple directions’ of time highlighted (Schneider, 2011: 26), and will focus particularly on the various pasts recalled, yet juxtaposed, during the *Forbidden Zone*. I am concerned further with the various presentations of the ‘live’ performances of the *Forbidden Zone*, and will consider the theoretical implications of ‘live’ streaming a performance, *prior* to ‘live’ staging; referencing my interest in the concept of reliving and regenerating performance. Echoing Schneider’s argument that reenactments are ‘not “over” in time’ (Schneider, 2011: 90), I argue for a zone of ‘unmarked liveness’, as a theoretical compromise between the times displayed during the *Forbidden Zone*, and crucially the times between the various presentations, and documentation, of the production.

Schneider’s chapter, ‘In the meantime: Performance Remains’, in *Performance remains: art and war in times of theatrical reenactment*, is redeveloped in Gabriella Giannachi, Nick Kaye and Michael Shanks’s 2012 *Archaeologies of presence: art, performance and the persistence of being*<sup>246</sup>.

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scientist, working as a nurse, treating a soldier during the war. (*The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16).

<sup>246</sup> Schneider’s ‘In the meantime: Performance Remains’ was itself reworked from a paper, written originally in 2001: ‘Performance Remains’. As a footnote to her 2011 book, intended to trace the path of the various versions of the essay, Schneider writes, ‘The essay is here altered somewhat from the original publication - modifications that bear the marks of the essay’s promiscuous afterlife ... More than any of my other writings, this essay has had an ethernet afterlife in the form of the manuscript changing hands, or jumping screens, in what seemed an irregular fashion’ (Schneider, 2011: 211). She continues, ‘When the manuscript was occasionally requested, I sent out whichever latest modification I had made. My promiscuity resulted in now untrackable alterations ... in a long and ongoing story more about circulation than about archival status (Schneider, 2011: 212). To be discussed, I will consider the notion of reliving text through a reconsideration of the relationship between performance and archives. Whilst I will not trace

Arguably reworked itself from the earlier *Theatre/Archaeology*<sup>247</sup> (Pearson and Shanks, 2001), a concern with the historical associations between presence and performance is discussed within the 2012 text: ‘discourses concerning the performance of presence have frequently hinged on the relationship between the live and mediated, on notions and effects of immediacy, authenticity and originality’ (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2). In my chapter, a central concern is the relationship between presence, the live and the mediated, considering the levels of live through a preoccupation with re-live-ing. Inferring a cycling of remembering, Giannachi et al note that:

Presence, here, is a phenomenon always in the process of being enacted and remembered, an experience never resolved but always a persistent, relational *effect*. Phenomena of presence thus occur in these acts of investment of one time, place and position in another - and so in temporary, performed acts of reciprocity [original emphasis] (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 24).

The notion of a ‘persistent, relational effect’ troubles the notions of ‘authenticity and originality’, as the ‘acts of reciprocity’ transcend a linear relationship between times (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 24; 2; 24). I will emphasize instead the “‘multipleness” of time (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 8), where history is less a boundary marked by space and time and rather a persistent presence, and claim that the *Forbidden Zone* highlights my concept of an ‘unmarked liveness’ echoing the ‘phenomena of presence’ hailed by Giannachi

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the paths of difference between the essays presented, Schneider’s palimpsestic writings that insist upon ‘performing’ and ‘remaining’, echo the overall arguments of the chapter.

<sup>247</sup> Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2.

et al.

Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks's considerations on the notion of archaeology relay the perspective that: 'Archaeology is increasingly understood less as the discovery of the past and more in terms of different relationships with what is left of the past' (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2). They further state that this has 'foregrounded anthropological questions of the performance and constructions of the past in memory, narrative, collections (of textual and material sources), archives and systems of documentation, in the experience of place' (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2). I argue that the *Forbidden Zone* works as a performing document, in so far as the use of live streaming both *of* and *in* the performances confuses the relationship between the two states. Furthermore, I want to argue that the use of archived footage within the performance theoretically challenges the ontology of the performance, with regards to documentation: Giannachi et al assert that reconsidering the archeology of presence has 'led to radically new forms of archaeological investigation and documentation that draw on and advance theatre theory and practice' (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2). I consider that the *Forbidden Zone* advances theatre practice and theory in bridging 'archaeological investigation and documentation' (Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, 2012: 2), and further argue that the site of performance becomes an archive. As Schneider notes that the 'archive itself becomes a social performance space, a theater of retroaction' (Schneider, 2012: 74), I claim that equally the space of performance becomes an archive. Michel Foucault notes that archives are 'at once close to us, and different from our present existence'; 'it is the border of time that surrounds our presence, which overhangs it, and which indicates it in its otherness; it is that



which, outside ourselves, delimits us' (Foucault, 1972: 130). Foucault's considerations will later be discussed in relation to my concept of the 'unmarked liveness'.

In this chapter I will consider the work of Mitchell, produced between countries, and between genres, simultaneously reflected in the themes and staging of the *Forbidden Zone*. I analyze the more filmic qualities demonstrated within the production, evidenced in the prior 'live' streaming before 'live' staging and the constant use of live streaming onstage<sup>248</sup>, and argue for a regenerated or renewed approach in regards to Mitchell's direction. Whilst Mitchell maintains her interest in texts as source material, the use of constant streaming alters the roles of the actors and their notion of presence within her media work. I explore the considerations of Giannachi, Kaye and Shanks, reflecting upon 'the uncanny encounter with one's own sense of self' (Giannachi, Kaye, Shanks, 2012: 2), evoked through reliving, as demonstrated by the intertwined lives of the female characters within the *Forbidden Zone*. I consider performance as a negotiation between 'performance' and 'documentation', and argue for a regenerated relationship between performance and the archive; asserting that the *Forbidden Zone* demonstrates my claim for a zone of 'unmarked liveness' between the two states.

#### *The Forbidden Zone: between*

The concept of the 'forbidden zone' presents a theoretical and ontological challenge, as an area unknown and unknowable. As an area *between*, the term the

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<sup>248</sup> Reflecting on the European productions, Leo Warner notes that the constant streaming, resembling a feature film, enhanced the atmosphere through a building of tension. The *Forbidden Zone*, which runs without an interval, climaxes with the suicide of the two central characters. Warner compares the work to a 'thriller' film. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

‘forbidden zone’ has been used diversely: associated with chemical bonding; the movement of the earth; or unwanted sex. Historically, the ‘forbidden zone’ was the term given to the stretch of land between allied troops and fire. A nurse in the First World War, Mary Borden, wrote a ‘collection of fragments’ pieced from her experiences serving in ‘the strip of land immediately behind the zone’<sup>249</sup>. Borden attempts, in her work *The Forbidden Zone*, to justify her recollections: ‘To those who find these impressions confused, I would say that they are fragments of a great confusion. Any attempt to reduce them to order would require artifice on my part and would falsify them’<sup>250</sup>. Describing a series of unreported events<sup>251</sup>, the collection culminates with a set of poems, lastly ‘Unidentified’<sup>252</sup>, the title arguably highlighting the unknown elements of both the physical and metaphorical ‘forbidden zone’. ‘Unidentified’, performed during the *Forbidden Zone*, accompanies text from four additional female scholars: Hannah Arendt, Simone de Beauvoir, Emma Goldman and Virginia Woolf, creating a reflection on war<sup>253</sup>. A ‘theatrical collage’<sup>254</sup> of thoughts, anger and protest, the individual voices are not cited within either the production, or the rehearsal script<sup>255</sup>, as if furthering the confusion regarding the state of the ‘forbidden zone’. Mitchell considers that ‘inspiration with a text’ aids the representation of ‘perception ... experience ... and behaviour’<sup>256</sup>. In a lengthy explanation of her working process with Dan Rebellato, she states:

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<sup>249</sup> *Ourstory*, 2016, (accessed: 26/01/17).

<sup>250</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

<sup>251</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

<sup>252</sup> *Ourstory*, 2016, (accessed: 26/01/17).

<sup>253</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

<sup>254</sup> Schaubühne Berlin, 2014, (accessed: 27/01/17).

<sup>255</sup> Clark, H., (2016) *Re: The Forbidden Zone*, [email] (received 28/06/16).

<sup>256</sup> Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13.

Questions like ‘What is character?’, ‘What is narrative?’ have been challenged and chewed over in other art forms for years now and yet linear narrative and traditional characters are the unchallenged staple diet of mainstream theatre practice. Germany re-imagined itself culturally after the Second World War and rejected many of these traditional components because they were connected to the way in which Nazism had unfolded itself. In theatre in the United Kingdom, we still insist on these old-fashioned rules that determine what theatre can or cannot be: it *must* have a story; it *must* be linear; there *must* be characters; there *must* be conflict; you *can’t* do behaviour; you *can’t* do states; you *can’t* do anything deconstructed or broken down that gets closer to how you actually experience yourself in the world, not as a great hero in a linear narrative, with clarity and a fixed personality, but as an ordinary person living a much more fragmented, shifting sense of reality. Any attempt to represent that in theatre is frowned upon in Britain. Not so in literature; not so in the visual arts. And, interestingly enough, not so in Europe: and for me that’s a real problem’ [original emphasis] (Rebellato, 2014: 217)

Mitchell’s apparent dislike of the United Kingdom is centred on ‘old-fashioned rules that determine what theatre can or cannot be’ (Rebellato, 2014: 217).

Mitchell, interested in the psychological aspects of character, wishes to subvert an idea of a ‘fixed personality’, achieving this dramatically through a ‘fragmented, shifting sense of reality’ (Rebellato, 2014: 217). Where Mitchell sought to challenge the ‘staple diet of mainstream theatre practice’, she became frustrated by the suppression of her creative energies, particularly at the National

Theatre<sup>257</sup>. As the Second World War enabled a reimagining of culture for Germany, so Mitchell's 'war' enabled regeneration. Immersing herself within a controversial, fragmentary text that describes a conflict between Germany and the United Kingdom, the *Forbidden Zone*, produced originally at the Schaubühne Berlin, falls *between*; both characters and time, associations and recollections, fact and fiction<sup>258</sup>.

The *Forbidden Zone* moves between genres and states due to its form and content. As the content will be discussed at length during the next section, I will here instead focus on the form of the *Forbidden Zone*, reflecting and enhancing my claims for a zone of 'unmarked liveness' as a negotiation between states of 'performance' and 'documentation'. Initially produced for the Salzburg Festival in 2014, the second 'live' performance of the *Forbidden Zone* was streamed to discrete audiences. The stream involved the use of additional cameras, beyond those needed to fuel Mitchell's media work. Leo Warner, reflecting on the process, notes:

There were 3 or more cameras added just for the cinecast, and each of those was streamed to a series of thumbnails below the main programme feed, for the cinecast audience only ... by doing so, the cinecast audience were able to see both the "output" that the live audience saw, as well as

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<sup>257</sup> Speaking five years after her resignation from the National Theatre, Mitchell speaks candidly about her experience: '... in retrospect I think there was a dislike [from Hytner] of the work I was making and a desire to rechannel my creative energies into safer territory for his repertoire, like children's shows, until suddenly it seemed that was all that I was doing', *The Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>258</sup> Whilst the experiences of Clara and Claire Haber are based upon truth; the addition of Kate, the scientist who worked as a nurse during the First World War, is a devised character. Kate is seen as a representation of the nurse and author of *The Forbidden Zone*, Mary Borden, Schaubühne Berlin, 2014, (accessed: 27/01/17). In an interview, Mitchell posits that the *Forbidden Zone* is '40% fact and 60% invention', Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

some of the making-of process that the live audience saw by watching the stage<sup>259</sup>.

Through an increased use of media, audiences such as those viewing at the Barbican Centre witnessed not only a live-streamed performance, but also an enhanced performance to those viewing in Salzburg, in terms of framing the experience. Warner notes of the work that such a ‘lively creation’, moves the genre of the *Forbidden Zone* towards film rather than performance<sup>260</sup>. Whilst I will not discuss further the ontology or possible ‘liveness’ of film, I am interested in the movement between genres and their relationship with performance and documentation. I argue that Mitchell’s media works, via their additional use of live streaming to discrete audiences effectively, creates another layer of performance, or documentation. Arguably displacing the notion of the live twice as it moves theoretically between the staged performance and streamed performance<sup>261</sup>, a third layer or element of performance and documentation occurs when considering the Barbican’s staged production two years later. The following section will discuss the content of the *Forbidden Zone* from the 2016

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<sup>259</sup> Warner, L., (2016) *Re: John Higgins – PM for Forbidden Zone*, [email] (received 17/06/16). Pascale Aebischer considers the work of director Mike Figgis, in particular *Hotel* (2001), in *Screening Early Modern Drama: Beyond Shakespeare* (2013). Aebischer comments on the use of technology, which similar to the presentation of the *Forbidden Zone*, splits between various narratives throughout. The film follows cast and crew shooting a version of *The Duchess of Malfi* in Venice, working as a documentary: thus an audience view two performances simultaneously. Aebischer notes that *Hotel* enabled an escape from ‘... the constraints of the cinematic medium with its single square screen and ... oppressive structures ...’ (Aebischer, 2013: 67). Aebischer further notes the use of split screen within individual shots, also used within Figgis’s *Miss Julie* (1999), which again divides the attention and gaze of the audience as with *the Forbidden Zone* (Aebischer, 2013: 86).

<sup>260</sup> Warner expressed his concern, however, that the *Forbidden Zone* was viewed through live stream stating that the ‘tension between the stage and screen is what makes it compelling’, referring here to the onstage, rather than film, screen. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>261</sup> A reviewer notes that ‘Adapting all of this to a live satellite stream tonight added a further level of mediation’, *Illuminations*, 2014, (accessed: 10/06/16).

staging, and further consider the notion of the ‘unmarked liveness’ as a theoretical negotiation between performance and documentation.

### *Becoming through materiality*

To relive is to go *through*, something: to *live* again. On every night of every Mitchell media production, the footage projected onstage is created, ‘live’<sup>262</sup>. Mitchell’s cast and crew relive the memories of the previous performances, engrained within their bodies, as the video records.<sup>263</sup> However, the materials relayed on the projectors during the *Forbidden Zone* were both recorded live for the audience, and recorded, live, for the archive. Whilst achieving a single, ‘clean’ output is an impractical task, due to the number of cameras used and scenes created within Mitchell’s media productions, remounting from live work aids regeneration<sup>264</sup>. It is working from the live-streamed footage created onstage, as well as the footage of the production captured at the Schaubühne Berlin for the archives<sup>265</sup>, that enabled the *Forbidden Zone* to move from Germany to the United Kingdom. With the exception of the output that enabled a ‘clean’ version of the projected sections, itself fuelling the live-streamed performance of the *Forbidden Zone*, ordinarily the footage generated during each performance was not recorded or documented due to ‘contractual reasons’<sup>266</sup>. Schneider, when recalling Peggy Phelan’s claims on documentation, cites that “‘performance becomes itself through’” disappearance (Schneider, 2011: 76),

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<sup>262</sup> Speaking on *Waves*, though reflecting upon her media productions, Mitchell notes the live qualities of her work, as considered in detail in chapter three; ‘The work using video ... was done live, with live acting and live camera operating’, (Rebellato, 2014: 220).

<sup>263</sup> Warner attributes the ease of replaying a role to ‘muscle memory’. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>264</sup> Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

<sup>265</sup> Zwernemann, I., (2016) *AW: AW: AW: Live streamed screening The Forbidden Zone*, [email] (received 22/06/16).

<sup>266</sup> Higgins, J., (2016) *Re: John Higgins – PM for Forbidden Zone*, [email] (received 15/06/16); Moir, I., (2016) *Katie Mitchell live streaming* [email] (received 10/06/16).

and I am interested in Schneider's emphasis on *becoming through*. As Schneider highlights a materiality or entity that must be worked *through*, I argue that performances become performance ⇔ documentation through the zone of 'unmarked liveness' that works as an area between 'lives'. In working through archival footage, as Warner notes the 'extraordinary amount of documentation'<sup>267</sup> accumulated, a re-live-d version of the *Forbidden Zone* was produced, a performance of documents.

The technology used within the *Forbidden Zone* acted as a material through which the performance of documents evolved. The use of digital preview screens onstage aided the complex camera set up, largely undertaken by Mitchell's technical team<sup>268</sup>. The audience was faced with three performance areas, each representing a different time period. As the action shifted through times, the technical team physically moved between areas, setting and shooting. Centre stage, the digital preview screens remained as a constant, uniting the various times depicted onstage. Splitting the preview screens into several parts, green and yellow frames indicated to the technical team the current shot as well as those in preparation. A thumbnail of the screen as projected to the audience completes the digital array shown to the technical team throughout. The screens, through indicating the movement of the actors and film crew onstage, are comparable to the notebooks used by the Foley actors within Mitchell's media performances at the National Theatre, working as a site of digital documentation amongst the performance<sup>269</sup>. The use of technology enhances the mode of documentation from analogue to digital, enabling a meeting of past, present and

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<sup>267</sup> *Fifty Nine Productions*, 2014, (accessed: 30/08/15).

<sup>268</sup> Only a small few of Mitchell's actors worked as Foleys within the *Forbidden Zone*, with the technical team completing the majority of the filming.

<sup>269</sup> Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

future shots, arguably combining documentation within performance.

Complicating the work of the technical team and justifying the need for preview screens onstage, the *Forbidden Zone* required two projector screens: a hanging projector above stage, similar to those used within *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, and an additional smaller screen, as a moving display used between the three areas onstage. As the downstage area is filled with a carriage of a train, the small screen moves behind as images of stations are interspersed with flashings of fields, trees and towns, projected to provide the effect of movement. Utilizing pre-recorded technology in a more visceral manner than compared with *Waves*<sup>270</sup>, presented ten years earlier, the audience of the *Forbidden Zone* experiences the documentation *performing*; an impression enhanced through the use of projected archival footage. The images, flickering in a steely black and white, move and jump around the screen, as if responding nervously to the sound of bombs and explosions overpowering the battlefield. The brutality of the conditions is evidenced as men are seen diving across the screen, clinging to their weapons. Juxtaposing the archival footage with the live-streamed projections from the stage, enveloping the battlefield scene, a layering of documentation becomes evident, as though the stream and pre-recorded work present an initial stage of documentation, which contrasts with the historical footage. Arguably however, reliving the archived recording, prompted by the narrative and content of the stage production, the documents appear as part of the performance; not ‘live’, but *relived*, or as Schneider posits, ‘never only live’ (Schneider, 2011: 92). Evoking a feeling between performance and documentation that I am describing as an ‘unmarked liveness’, enabled by the

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<sup>270</sup> The shots of waves, for example, created more of a scenic opening, as if a series of establishing shots; as compared with the dynamic, moving environments created in the *Forbidden Zone* (Mitchell, 2008: 6).



use of technology, the streaming of archived and projected material merge to illustrate the concept of the [forbidden] zone, *between*.

### *Relive*

The creation of a photograph during the first moments of the *Forbidden Zone* prompts recollections throughout, as the picture, working as a performing document, enables reminiscing and reliving. Centre stage, a Soldier is dressed in First World War uniform, largely shielded from the audience due to a complex array of set and technology. As a camera zooms in on the soldier's face, projected on the large screen above the stage, a short, high pitched note sounds and the view alters; a camera and photographer are depicted, preparing to picture the Soldier on his day of enlistment<sup>271</sup>. A voiceover sounds, 'Look well at this man. Look!' as another high pitched noise strikes and the view changes to a close shot of the Soldier, moving closer and closer still as the voiceover continues, ' ... For you have something interesting to learn by looking at this man'<sup>272</sup>. As the camera slows to a stop, the photograph is taken, freezing the live streaming on the projector overhead. The photograph becomes a theatrical device: a vehicle in telling the Soldier's story, echoing Schneider's assertion in valuing the 'document over event' (Schneider, 2011: 100). Kate, a nostalgic Scientist who worked as a Nurse during the war, still carries the picture and recalls with longing the Soldier who died due to chlorine gas poisoning. As I will describe shortly the nature of these recollections and their greater impact upon the doubled lives and location of the live throughout the *Forbidden Zone*, I will here

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<sup>271</sup> I was grateful to receive a version of the script of the *Forbidden Zone*, released with approval from playwright Duncan Macmillan. Clark, H., (2016) *Re: The Forbidden Zone*, [email] (received 28/06/16).

<sup>272</sup> *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

focus upon the nature of the photograph as a performing document. The photograph is taken onstage, and projected above the stage, onscreen, for the benefit of the audience. In this regard, the live stream produces documentation, through the creation of the photograph on screen. The picture, working as a media device in this instance, is later recalled physically in the hands of Kate, rather than digitally; although still framed through the projector overhead when viewed by the actor onstage. In combining the forms of the photograph via its recording abilities, the screen facilitates the picture's movement from analogue to digital, resulting in layers of live performance through the use of physical and digital presentations. The photograph works between performance and document as a live reliving.

The close use of actors and technology within the *Forbidden Zone* disrupts what I might term the 'location' of the live onstage, furthered by the use of flashbacks that encourage a sense of reliving. A technical team that manipulates the technology and various cameras onstage set and shoot throughout the *Forbidden Zone*. In contrast with previous Mitchell media productions, specifically *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her* where the actors worked as Foleys recording footage and acting within footage simultaneously, only one cast member was responsible for filming<sup>273</sup>; a task largely undertaken by the technical team rather than the actors. As Mitchell notes that several actors such as Clara and Claire are required onstage throughout making it impossible for them to record footage<sup>274</sup>, these actors are not always being recorded; rather the quick interchange between scenes involves freezing in position with readied cameras surrounding. Kate's series of flashbacks prompted by the picture of the

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<sup>273</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

<sup>274</sup> Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16.

Soldier, saw actress Kate Duchêne pause downstage left as the Scientist, whilst her recalled self as Nurse speaks with the Soldier downstage centre. As the action between Nurse and Soldier ceases, so the cameras facing Duchêne record once again<sup>275</sup>. The downstage work creates an effect of interrelated scenes for the audience watching the overhead projector, as the action appears fragmentary and peculiar, presenting a non-linear narrative onstage for the sake of sense on screen. Locating the live action as audience member is confusing in this situation, as the work is pieced together from the various sections of stage and story. Furthermore, the use of the flashback creates confusion in locating Duchêne's characters and presence onstage. Frozen as the Scientist downstage left, another 'Kate' is required to act as the Nurse downstage centre, as their playing is simultaneous<sup>276</sup>. The splitting of Duchêne's presence between two bodies onstage disrupts the notion as well as the location of the live actor. During a later scene, Duchêne relives a memory as the Scientist, rather than Nurse. As Kate recalls an exchange with Haber where the keys of the laboratory pass from herself to Claire, the audience realizes along with the Scientist the potential for Haber to commit suicide, with access to the various poisonous substances unlocked. A reviewer notes the brevity of the scene, and suspects that the recalled footage was that recorded live during the performance<sup>277</sup>. As Duchêne is

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<sup>275</sup> *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

<sup>276</sup> Duchêne is listed in the cast list as playing 'Nurse/Scientist', however, due to the proximity of the space as well as the workings of the production, it is not physically possible for her to play both roles simultaneously. Whilst a separate 'Nurse' is not listed within the programme, a note offers some insight, stating: 'Other camera takes, sounds and voices by members of the Ensemble (off stage)', Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note]. Although not mentioning specifically the role of the Nurse, it is possible that an ensemble member stood in place for these recordings, thereby allowing Duchêne to hold position as Scientist elsewhere and thus allowing the scenes to play simultaneously.

<sup>277</sup> The reviewer of *Live from Salzburg* notes on the scene: 'I was curious about some of the very brief flash-backs towards the end as to whether all of these were done live, or whether some fragments of previously recorded video was played into the mix – the fact that I couldn't tell was

represented both digitally as Scientist and physically as Nurse, an uncanny experience occurs for both actor and audience<sup>278</sup>. A sense of the ‘live’ body and time is theoretically challenged through reliving, troubled further still with the addition of technology.

### *Regenerate*

I consider the *Forbidden Zone* as a working archive, due to the regeneration of material that moves between performance and documentation. Between a sense of linearity and circularity, I argue that the production exemplifies Foucault’s considerations on historical analysis. Foucault states that: ‘The archive is first the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events’, and continues;

But the archive is also that which determines that all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity ... but they are grouped together in distinct figures composed together in accordance with multiple relations, maintained or blurred in accordance with specific regularities ... (Foucault, 1979: 129).

Foucault suggests a complicated relationship between archival remains, as they appear to tussle between harmony and discord. He suggests that archives are both

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a further indication of how achieved the performance was’. *Illuminations*, 2014, (accessed: 10/06/16).

<sup>278</sup> *Fraulein Julie*, presented at the Barbican in 2013, also uses several actors to portray one character. Projecting Mitchell’s concern with the psychological aspects of individuals, the use of various actors enhances the diverse sides of characters, opposing the notion of a fixed construct of identity. Private interview, Mitchell, K., 30/07/13. During the after show talk on *Fraulein Julie*, Rebellato discussed the notion of body doubles and the uncanny experience for the actors; suggesting that the bodies, dressed in grey, worked like ghosts onstage. *Fraulein Julie*, By Strindberg, A., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 30/04/2013.

governed and maintained as ‘unique events’, and that there is a grouping together of similarities ‘composed in accordance with multiple relations’ (Foucault, 1979: 129). He continues that ‘all these things said do not accumulate endlessly in an amorphous mass, nor are they inscribed in an unbroken linearity’: there appears a shift between a ‘maintained or blurred’ ordering (Foucault, 1979: 129), as the archive appears to move according to material generated. Relating the concept of movement within the archive to the *Forbidden Zone*, the use of repeated motifs or fragmentary traces represent Foucault’s considerations of the unique and yet multiple relations of the archive. The use of photographs, for example, cited throughout the production, act as documents that enhance the performance, in this regard working as examples of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ simultaneously. The separate photographs cited enhance the overall narrative of the production: the story of Kate’s soldier is personalized through the use of the photograph, carried by the Nurse turned Scientist thirty years after the Soldier’s poisoning. Claire Haber holds a photograph of her Grandfather, Fritz; and likewise reveals another photograph of a woman dressed in a lab coat, presumed to be her Grandmother, soon before she commits suicide. Whilst these photographs are projected in isolation for the audience, reflecting Foucault’s notion of the unique elements contained within the archive, the audience group together these documents, or archival traces, to aid meaning. Through a similar analysis of material, the work of the audience is paralleled with the pursuit of the archivist: Foucault notes that ‘tools have enabled workers in the historical field to distinguish various sedimentary strata; linear successions, which for so long had been the object of research, have given way to discoveries in depth’

(Foucault, 1979: 3)<sup>279</sup>. Further, Foucault considers the models through which the strata or successions are analyzed, advocating the notion of a ‘circular causality’ (Foucault, 1979: 4). Akin to my concept of a cycling between performance and documentation, the strata or layers of history described are punctuated by unique incidences; eventually grouped into a series of events. In relation to the *Forbidden Zone*, I argue that the intertwined lives of Clara and Claire Haber work as an example of ‘circular causality’ (Foucault, 1979: 4). Whilst the production parallels their lives, the suicides of Clara and Claire were discrete, occurring over thirty years apart. The cause of their suicides however, chlorine gas, unites the incidences. Through Claire’s reliving of Clara’s anxiety<sup>280</sup>, Mitchell is able to theatrically juxtapose the suicides. The space of the production becomes an archive, working as a performance and a documentation of the lives and deaths of the women in depicting the events that led to their suicides both in isolation and in uncanny regeneration.

The inclusion of reports, relived and regenerated in the *Forbidden Zone*, enhances my argument that the production functions as a working archive. As Foucault notes that history is ‘nothing more than a rewriting: ... a regulated transformation of what has already been written’ (Foucault, 1979: 140), I argue that Macmillan’s script encourages a regeneration of material, furthered by Mitchell’s staging that enables a new reading and understanding of history through its reliving. The *Forbidden Zone* highlights a significant experiment in the early use of chlorine gas, and hypothesizes on the formation of the report. In a scene where Fritz paces his study, pausing on occasion to think and phrase, Clara sits at the desk in the library downstage right, penning the words of the

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<sup>279</sup> The use of tools here could relate to the use of technology within the *Forbidden Zone*, specifically the use of live streaming.

<sup>280</sup> *Salzburgerfestspiele*, 2014, (accessed: 27/01/17).

report dictated by her husband. Fritz notes that there was a clear vision of the land and perfect conditions, as thousands of gas cylinders were set off: ‘the sheet of gas swamped the field’<sup>281</sup>. Clara continues to write, though she is clearly disturbed. Fritz, unknowing or uncaring of Clara’s discomfort, continues, noting that upon reaching the French line, ‘the guns stopped firing; I could hear distant bird song ... the stream ... wind ... it was as if there was no war’<sup>282</sup>. Concluding, Fritz reports: ‘It is a higher form of killing’<sup>283</sup>. The audience witness his signature on the report, projected on the screen overhead. As Fritz later locks Clara in the library after her protesting to the scientific experiment, she relives the experience of writing the report. Clara slowly circles words and phrases as she reads back the report, notably highlighting ‘no future’ and ‘superior killing’. Through Macmillan’s rewriting and Mitchell’s direction, a different interpretation of the report can be gleaned: a performance of protest. Macmillan notes that Clara’s suicide, rather than a mark against the inhumane killing advocated by her husband, is ‘typically understood as [the act] of a depressed woman’; indeed the newspaper report on Clara’s death states that the ‘reasons for the actions of this unhappy woman are unknown’<sup>284</sup>. Highlighting Clara’s defiance of her husband’s actions in taking her own life in objection to the lives cruelly taken by chlorine gas, the documents are performed with renewed understanding within the *Forbidden Zone*.

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<sup>281</sup> *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

<sup>282</sup> *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

<sup>283</sup> *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

<sup>284</sup> See ‘Author’s Note’, p7 and ‘The Death of Clara Immerwahr by Oliver Lamford’, p8, respectively. Mitchell, K., (2016) *The Forbidden Zone*, [programme note].

Granddaughter Claire's suicide is staged in conjunction with Clara's, enhancing the value of her sacrifice. As Clara sits in the library downstage right, Claire enters the laboratory downstage left. Using the keys to unlock the chemical cupboard, Claire collects cyanide and places the poison in a small box. Putting on her white lab coat, she leaves the laboratory with a water container. Cutting to downstage right, the overhead projector shows Clara beginning to remove her jewellery: a ring and a necklace that she has worn throughout the production. She moves into the small garden adjacent to the library where she has been reading the report, and drops the jewellery into the fountain. As the camera cuts back to downstage left, Claire begins to mix the poison with water taken from a public washroom. As Claire begins to drink, so Clara raises a gun to her chest, standing alone by the water fountain, with the projector flashing between shots of both women. Due to the train covering the downstage area, masking the eventual deaths, the audience observes the shooting and poisoning via the projector screen, catching only glimpses of both women struggling onstage. As Clara slowly sinks into the fountain stage right, a shot of Clara's necklace is seen on the floor of the washroom with Claire stage left, theatrically linking the deaths of the women.

Foucault's noting that the archive does not 'search for a beginning', rather 'the general theme of a description that questions the already-said' (Foucault, 1979: 131) feels pertinent as a desperate Kate, holding the dying Claire, cries, 'let there be an end to it'<sup>285</sup>. As *The Forbidden Zone* examines a

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<sup>285</sup> A third death is shown onstage. The Scientist, Kate, who realizes the intention of Claire Haber in taking the keys of the chemical cupboard, struggles to return to the washrooms quickly enough to stop the poisoning. As Kate holds Claire, supporting as her mouth spews poison; she relives the death of the Soldier she nursed during the First World War. As the Soldier struggles centre stage, with Claire and Clara surrounding stage left and right respectively, the audience witness



cycling of history, depriving ‘us of our continuities’, the dismissing of a notion of linearity exemplifies Foucault’s considerations; marking the ‘already-said’ through a demonstration of reliving (Foucault, 1979: 131). Through a regeneration of the notes and documents that dissect and relate the lives of Clara and Claire, a new performance is created that highlights the significance of history via Mitchell’s performing document: her working archive.

The *Forbidden Zone* is concerned with the notion of reliving, demonstrated both in terms of content as well as staging. The initial production, screened at the Barbican Centre two years before the staging held at the venue’s Theatre, encourages a theoretical discussion regarding the nature of the ‘live’. I argue that the staged production, reworked from archives gathered at the Schaubühne Berlin and during the live screening, theoretically alters the production staged at the Barbican. I consider that the performance works as a documentation of the prior staging and screening, thereby creating a hybridized form of production. I consider that further elements of the production such as the use of archived footage, enhance my theory that the production works as both performance and documentation. The use of historical footage from the First World War creates another level of documentation, in that the layering of live(s) mirrors the juxtaposition of narrative during the *Forbidden Zone*. The intertwined lives of Clara Immerwahr and Claire Haber depict different times and places, although the message of resistance exhibited by both women is strengthened due to the regenerated, dual telling. The third significant woman within the production, Kate, was a fictional character, based upon the author of *The Forbidden Zone*,

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three deaths triggered by chlorine gas, simultaneously. *The Forbidden Zone*, By Macmillan, D., (Dir.) Mitchell, K., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 28/05/16.

Mary Borden. Nurse turned Scientist, the character of Kate works to drive the production, building the suspense that climaxes in the joint suicides of Clara and Claire, as well as enabling a passage for reminiscing: it is her ruminating that prompts the historical footage shown on the projector screen, thereby uniting the theatrical world with the First World War. Kate's photograph of the Soldier, who dies during the final stages of the *Forbidden Zone*, works as an emblem within the production as other historical photographs are cited such as the face of Fritz Haber; thus combining factual with fictitious documents, echoing my assertion that the production works between 'performance' and 'documentation'. I argue that the production functions as a working archive, highlighting as an example the hypothesized reliving of historical reports; notably the document detailing the first devastating experiment with chlorine gas. Echoing the assertions of Foucault, I argue that the *Forbidden Zone* works as an example of 'circular causality' (Foucault, 1979: 4). Considering the twinned lives of Clara and Claire that are juxtaposed within Mitchell's production, both suicides are concerned with a single cause; Fritz's creation of a poisonous gas to commit mass murder during the war. I extend this notion of circularity, however, to describe the relationship between performance and documentation. As a production based upon an archived version of itself, the Barbican's 2016 performances work as examples of documentation. The use of historical aids such as photographs and footage, further confuse the supposed binary between performance and documentation, creating a layering of material, and arguably a regeneration of archives. As Schneider notes in her reflection on war that 'time to protest ... is not over' (Schneider, 2011: 186), I finally argue for the notion of reliving; demonstrated in the various stages of performance and documentation within the

*Forbidden Zone*, that exemplify a zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ through their re-live-ing.

The concept of reliving within the *Forbidden Zone* forces a remembering: devised to commemorate the centenary of the First World War, the production demonstrates conflict and suggests a path towards resolution. Arguably reuniting Europe, specifically Germany, with the United Kingdom, the *Forbidden Zone* regenerates the presence of Mitchell, and her media work, after the conflict that saw her exiled<sup>286</sup>. Regenerated, Mitchell’s return to media work in the United Kingdom relived moments of previous productions; the use of photography and freezing of live stream are evidenced within both *Waves* and *...Some trace of her*, and Mitchell’s desire to devise from texts unites these productions with the *Forbidden Zone*. However her regeneration prompted a change within her approach towards a more filmic genre: using her cast to act rather than film and instead a technical team to ensure quality filming throughout, in addition to live streaming her work; the *Forbidden Zone* creates coherence on the projected screen, rather than the stage that is often submerged in crew and set<sup>287</sup>. As she returns to Europe to produce further media work, apparently still wary of the conflicts that prevented her from producing in the United Kingdom, Mitchell’s latest work has been described as ‘not theatre or film; it is a strange other thing,

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<sup>286</sup> *The Guardian*, 2016, (accessed: 09/06/16).

<sup>287</sup> Mitchell acknowledges that in her latest media productions, the audience are exposed to less camera work, hidden within the depths of set, and generally created by technical crew dressed in blacks, rather than actors working as Foleys. Mitchell, K., (2016) *Weekend Lab: Katie Mitchell*. Barbican Centre. 07-08/05/16. Warner, in defending the *Forbidden Zone* however, argues that whilst there were a few more cameras than bodies onstage, this was due to the practicalities of the train that consumed a great deal of the downstage area, absorbing both space for actors and thus sightlines for audiences. Warner concludes that there was never a ‘desire to conceal’, finally noting positively that the use of extra cameras provides the audience with additional close access to the production, as displayed through the projector above the stage. Private interview, Warner, L., 01/07/16.

which uses both the strength of the film world and the theatre world'<sup>288</sup>.

Concluded as 'Katie Mitchell's third art'<sup>289</sup>, she makes her work living between.

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<sup>288</sup> See 'Not Theatre, Not Film: Katie Mitchell's Third Art in the »Shadow«', Joseph Pearson, Schaubühne Berlin, 2016, (accessed: 26/09/16).

<sup>289</sup> 'Not Theatre, Not Film: Katie Mitchell's Third Art in the »Shadow«', Joseph Pearson, Schaubühne Berlin, 2016, (accessed: 26/09/16).

## REGENERATE

### REVIVE: ‘To be or not to be’: disrupting ontologies

Melvyn Bragg interviewed Benedict Cumberbatch to gather information on Cumberbatch’s role as Hamlet in director Lyndsey Turner’s 2015 Barbican production. The interview, shown to cinema audiences ahead of NT Live’s streaming<sup>290</sup>, discussed the idea of deposits; with Bragg suggesting to Cumberbatch that *Hamlet* is ‘fading’<sup>291</sup>. This chapter suggests a revival to the proposed fading of *Hamlet*, and moreover, demonstrates a regeneration of audience viewing habits and interaction with the production prompted by the use of live-streaming. I consider the popularity of Turner’s production, as the fastest selling London theatre show in history that played eighty times to sold out audiences, in relation to the high numbers of cinemas live broadcasting *Hamlet* (2015)<sup>292</sup>. I discuss the relevance of social media in lengthening the ‘life’ or impact of performance via outlets such as online documentation, and apply the term ‘paradocumentation’ to unite the various stages of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ surrounding *Hamlet*.

Media scholar Henry Jenkins in his 2006 work, *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, discusses the regeneration of material through digital means. Jenkins notes that digital ‘convergence’, ‘represents a cultural shift as consumers are encouraged to seek out new information and make connections among dispersed media content’ (Jenkins, 2006: 3). Regarding

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<sup>290</sup> Increasingly, NT Live stream productions from discrete venues such as the Barbican Centre, as well as from other significant theatres north of the river.

<sup>291</sup> *Hamlet*, By Shakespeare, W., (Dir.) Turner, L., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 15/10/15.

<sup>292</sup> *The Guardian*, 2015, (accessed: 30/12/15).

*Hamlet* and the NT Live project, audience members or ‘consumers’ (Jenkins, 2006: 3) are required to relate a staged production with a cinematic output, exhibiting what Jenkins describes as ‘the flow of content across multiple media platforms’ (Jenkins, 2006: 2); thereby allowing a theoretical movement between forms also. Jenkins acknowledges resistance to convergence, evidenced through the identification of collision between new and old media. This chapter will consider further the disrupted ontological essence of media created by live-streamed performances.

In his 2010 book, *Post-Cinematic Affect*, cultural critic Steven Shaviro identifies a difference between cinematic spaces. Shaviro argues that there are two forms of delivery: with one aiming to document whilst the other works as a ‘post-cinematic mediasphere’ (Shaviro, 2010: 67). The latter mediasphere is a product of culture that encompasses several different forms within its delivery; with Shaviro noting likewise that a ‘media ecology’ (Shaviro, 2010: 7) also absorbs various media within its remit whilst not attributing an indexical relationship to the collected elements. Whereas Jenkins identifies old and new forms of media, and highlights also a possible anxiety in moving between these forms, Shaviro considers the movement between media forms as seamless, working as a flow between elements that build and develop over time. Whilst I agree with Shaviro’s assertions, I appreciate the categorization of media used within Jenkins’s theory on ‘convergence’. It is with this in mind that I consider further the categories or levels that contribute to paradocumentation.

The notion of paradocumentation is adapted from the term ‘paradata’, described by Anna Bentkowska-Kafel, Hugh Denard and Drew Baker in their 2012 edited works *Paradata and Transparency in Virtual Heritage*.

Bentkowska-Kafel et al describe paradata as ‘information about human processes of understanding and interpretation of data objects. Paradata is thus constantly being created, irrespective of whether they are systematically recorded or disseminated’<sup>293</sup>. The gathering of holistic material or (para) data, recorded or to use another term, documented, is of interest when considering the extended life of digital performances. That the information is ‘constantly being created’, echoes the regeneration of material; aiding further ‘understanding and interpretation’<sup>294</sup>. The use of the term paradocumentation advances the principle of ‘paradata’, considering specifically the various stages or layers of documentation produced through digital performance.

Paradocumentation can be divided into parts that in turn create a whole: pre-text, con-text and post-text. I focus on the relationship between pre-text and post-text within this chapter, and consider their paths as interwoven. NT Live broadcasts such as *Hamlet* promote material such as trailers online, working as a marketing tool. I have noted elsewhere that the single ‘live’ performance and its documentation via live-streaming’ is effectively a ‘primary’ source or text; therefore other material such as trailers or indeed reviews posted online after the ‘live’ performance, can be identified as either pre or post-text material<sup>295</sup>. Pascale Aebischer, when considering the life of the document with regards to online performances, specifically pertaining to Shakespearean works, states that:

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<sup>293</sup> *Proquest reader*, 2012, (accessed: 16/05/17).

<sup>294</sup> *Proquest reader*, 2012, (accessed: 16/05/17).

<sup>295</sup> I am grateful to Daisy Abbott for her help with producing, ‘Paradocumentation and NT Live’s ‘CumberHamlet’, which inspired the content of this chapter. Abbott’s thinking on paradocumentation extended my own thinking around a cyclical relationship between performance and documentation, in relation to live-streaming. I am also grateful to Dr Toni Sant, editor of the collected works, for his encouragement and support in developing these ideas.

In twenty-first-century performance culture, the live can no longer be easily extricated from the online environment in which it is embedded.

Live performance often co-exists with and is preceded by its own online archival record and can even invite a dialogue with its online remediations (Aebischer, 2013: 145)<sup>296</sup>.

I argue that pre and post-text documentation lengthen the ‘life’ of the performance through further reinterpretation and regeneration on behalf of audiences. I discuss the relationship between the stages of documentation within the chapter; and evidence various developments of live-streaming and productions of *Hamlet* as evidence of revival, regeneration and paradocumentation<sup>297</sup>.

This chapter considers the concept and location of the ‘live’, specifically problematized here through a splitting of Cumberbatch’s role as both film and theatre actor, displayed simultaneously within one artistic space at the Barbican Centre. I analyze elements of revival, or reanimation, in the production, through the theatrical techniques and props used within Turner’s interpretation. Furthering the connection with previous productions of *Hamlet* and their relationship with live-streaming, I study the recording, documenting and regeneration of portrayals of the Prince. For example, Richard Burton’s starring role in the Broadway production of *Hamlet*, directed by John Gielgud, aired in 1964 via ‘Electronovision’, an early live-streaming experiment, and was

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<sup>296</sup> Susanne Greenhalgh, writing in *Shakespeare Bulletin*, notes that ‘this way of mediating Shakespearean performance [via live streaming] is not going to disappear any time soon’ (Greenhalgh, 2014: 261).

<sup>297</sup> Whilst not the focus of the chapter, I cite another NT Live screening of *Hamlet*, shown at the National Theatre in 2010, starring Rory Kinnear and directed by Nicholas Hytner, in order to further demonstrate a regeneration and revival of material shared between various Shakespearean outputs.



screened at over 1000 cinemas in the United States. A further regeneration of the performance was developed by the Wooster Group, directed by Elizabeth LeCompte, in 2005<sup>298</sup>.

The latter section of the chapter considers in more detail audience reception towards Turner's *Hamlet*, and the application of paradocumentation. The use of social media is discussed, in relation to both Cumberbatch's reaction to his fans as well as reaction from NT Live viewers gathered from audience surveys<sup>299</sup>. I consider the development of the NT Live project from the National Theatre to discrete venues such as the Barbican. I conclude that live-streamed performances such as *Hamlet* promote paradocumentation, altering the conventional understanding of the relationship between performance and documentation through the use of technology and media.

### *To be or not to be*

The material shown to cinema audiences before the live screening of *Hamlet* works as an example of pre-text documentation that arguably lengthens the 'life' of the performance. The content of the pre-text, mirroring a production programme in listing not only notes on the performance but also detailing

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<sup>298</sup> Whilst the production was originally shown in 2005, it has been revived on several occasions, the latest showing occurring at the Edinburgh International Festival in 2013. The Wooster Group, 2016, (accessed: 20/07/16).

<sup>299</sup> Whilst I will not demonstrate data in quantitative forms, as this would be in contradistinction with the qualitative approach to research within the thesis, I surveyed six audiences who watched NT Live performances of Turner's *Hamlet*. Although I contacted the Barbican Centre and asked to survey at the theatre and cinema's staging and screening of the performances, my request was denied. Bennett, M. V., (2015) *NT Live Survey, Hamlet, 15<sup>th</sup> October*, [email] (received 25/09/15). As a result I pursued various other venues with more success. Surveys were issued at Richmond's Curzon in South London, about twelve miles from the Barbican Centre; Warwick Arts Centre, a midlands venue close to the second capital, Birmingham; and an international venue, Spazju Kreattiv at St James Cavalier in Valletta, Malta. All venues showed the initial screening on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015, although Warwick Arts Centre also showed an encore screening on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2015. Spazju Kreattiv likewise aired an encore on this date, and also a week prior, on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2015. A total of 183 questionnaires were returned and create the basis for results within the chapter.

upcoming shows at the venue, engages viewers in displaying ‘teaser’ material. For example, photographs taken during the rehearsal stages of *Hamlet* were displayed on a loop; engaging the cinema audiences whose screen is split between the rehearsal photographs and a clock counting down the minutes until the rest of the production is revealed. Although these rehearsal shots are currently unrecognisable to the audiences, displaying pictures of a production yet-to-be-seen, the central figure of Cumberbatch throughout works as an anchor in grounding the display, further engaging audiences through the partial revealing of the leading actor. Whilst the embellishment of the shots remain unseen to audiences at this stage, the memories or documents of rehearsals being played before the main production creates a theoretical shift in time because of the confusion between *before*, *during* and *after* the production, problematizing the concept of NT ‘Live’. A merging between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ occurs as the pre-text material such as a marketing resource, whilst part of the cinematic event, is displayed ahead of the production; affecting the supposed linear relationship between the two states. The Encore screenings, shown subsequently to the (NT) live screenings, further trouble the notion of the ‘live’; creating another level of documentation or performance: the rehearsal shots shown ahead of the production depict the rehearsal stages of a performance that has already aired ‘live’. Whilst during NT Live performances the rehearsal shots depict the planning or pre-production material, the same pre-text material is shown as (NT) live during the Encore screenings; these delayed screenings themselves working as post-text material. Thus the cited rehearsal shots theoretically shift, acting as post-text material, as well as pre-text (Abbott and Read, 2017: 167). The use of the term ‘paradocumentation’ that encompasses

both pre and post-text content intends to highlight the extension of performances via documentation; attempting to theoretically divide times of presentation in order to demonstrate the disrupted sense of the ‘live’ under streamed performances.

Whilst I will discuss the disrupted sense of ontology evoked through the production, echoing the varying types of documentation exhibited such as pre and post-text material, a reference ahead of *Hamlet’s* live screening displayed another disrupted *essence*: the audience. Morgan Quaintance acted as commentator and broadcaster ahead of the NT Live screening of Turner’s production, and confirmed that the theatre at the Barbican Centre was at capacity. Indeed, such was the demand for seats that the venue live-streamed their own production, live from the theatre, to the Barbican’s cinema just floors below. The Barbican’s decision to multiply their outputs emphasizes the popularity of the production, with the venue issuing the following statement: ‘Due to unprecedented demand, we are screening this very special NT Live production of *Hamlet* in cinemas 1, 2 and 3; giving you a chance to see this sold-out show live’<sup>300</sup>. I have noted elsewhere the significance of the word ‘live’ within the Barbican’s statement (Abbott and Read, 2017: 168). The Barbican Centre divided its ‘live’ content into two categories to complement the two areas that display the output: a staged ‘live’, found within the Barbican theatre, and a screened ‘live’, found within the Barbican’s cinemas. I will briefly consider the notion of the live as described by Philip Auslander in order to analyze the Barbican’s divided ‘live’ outputs. Auslander notes that the initial terming of the ‘live’ was used in order to create a contrast with recordings. He notes that the

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<sup>300</sup> Barbican, 2015, (accessed: 02/01/16).

‘first citation of the word “live” comes from the BBC Yearbook for 1934 and iterates the complaint “that recorded material was too liberally used” on the radio’ (Auslander, 2008: 59). The example, which recalls a preference for music performed by musicians in a studio to be played on radio, rather than a recording of their music, works as an example of a tautological and terminological, rather than ontological change, according to Auslander (Auslander, 2008: 59). The difference between the two forms of ‘live’ is concerned with mode or output, rather than content. Auslander’s concept of ‘digital liveness’ (Auslander, 2012: 3), working as a solution to the theoretical binary previously established that divides the live, incorporates performances that include or exclude co-temporality and co-presence, such as the performances of *Hamlet* shown in the Barbican cinemas. I argue therefore that whilst the Barbican Centre’s presentation of *Hamlet* divided and altered live display in both practical and theoretical terms, simultaneously dividing ‘live’ audiences; that the use of ‘live’ streaming as a digital platform created a theatrical and cinematic live, a digital form of the ‘live’ altering both reception and viewing of the performances.

The proximity between the Barbican’s cinema and stage versions of *Hamlet* metaphorically divides the actors, effectively creating a performance and simultaneous ‘document’ of Cumberbatch’s portrayal of the Prince. Although *Hamlet* was broadcast to discrete audiences, in contrast with other NT Live performances, the production was staged and also screened within the same venue. I have previously noted that whereas the ‘live cinema audiences are [ordinarily] estranged and distanced from the theatrical bodies onstage, Cumberbatch spewed and spat Shakespeare for over three hours to a live theatre audience, with a live cinema audience watching his cinematic double a few

floors below’ (Abbott and Read, 2017: 168). With the exception of curtains and concrete, Cumberbatch was physically *present* in the Barbican Centre, performing for all those within the venue. The Barbican’s cinema audiences clearly desired to view *Hamlet* in the same location as the production played, co-temporal and co-present, rather than booking at a more convenient, discrete location. Despite their proximity to Cumberbatch, these audiences undoubtedly viewed a streamed Cumberbatch who performed in the Barbican theatre; therefore viewing a *digital* ‘live’. However, if both versions of Cumberbatch depict a ‘live’ performance, *digital* or *physical*, then the only distinction between them occurs through terminological means, as indicated by Auslander: the physical Cumberbatch is only identified due to his opposite, technological body. Whilst one Cumberbatch is *a-live* and speaks to a theatre audience, the other Cumberbatch is *a-version of-live*, digitally addressing a cinema audience. With regards to documentation, the Cumberbatch within the theatre presents the ‘original’, thus rendering the digital version as a regenerated counterpart. The screened version thus works here as a digital double or ‘document’ of Cumberbatch. Considering Auslander’s assertion of a digital live however, and recalling the title of the performance as an NT Live production, I conclude that ‘the cinematic document can be seen as a live performance of *Hamlet* in its own right ... in reality played seconds behind the theatre due to streaming delays, its live performative qualities, and significantly its labelling as live, mark it as a hybrid working between performance and performance document’ (Abbott and Read, 2017: 169).

*Revive*

In this section I argue that Turner's *Hamlet* focused on the theme of revival and cite her use of text and props to support this assertion. Considering the text initially, Turner's production highlighted a scene effectively staged by Hamlet: the creation of a play within a play. The scene is of significance within the production, working as a parallel to demonstrate Hamlet's frustrations at both his mother and his uncle who have quickly overcome the death of his father, marrying and leaving Hamlet suspicious of foul play. The monologue, observed in this production by both Hamlet's mother and uncle, sees the First Player reciting a passage from Hecuba who speaks of her tragic loss, mourning for the death of her husband King Priam. Schneider, writing not on Turner's production but of the importance of Hamlet's scene, notes:

The character Hamlet is mounting a "live" performance to function as record - troubled as that record may be - for a prior event (his father's murder) otherwise recorded only by the testimony of a phantom, caught, as it were, *in the meantime* of the live [original emphasis] (Schneider, 2011: 89).

The idea of revival is significant to Schneider's observations. In citing the ghost or 'phantom' (Schneider, 2011: 89) of Hamlet's father, Schneider advocates another layer; an alternative live entity within the play demonstrated '*in the meantime*' [original emphasis] (Schneider, 2011: 89). Hamlet's recollections arguably prompt a revival of the King as he is brought to presence again. Schneider continues her analysis with regards to performance and documentation, expressing that:

The problem of the record in relation to the live here slips away from tidy distinction. Add to this the vexed situation that in theatre (at least in theatre staging plays), the live act succeeds, surrogates, or comes after a precedent textual script. That is, in the dramatic theatre the live *is not first* or not *only* first. The live act does not necessarily, or does not only, precede that which has been set down, recorded. In the dramatic theatre, the live is a troubling trace of a precedent text and so (herein lies the double trouble) comes afterward, even arguably remains afterward, as a *record* of the text *set in play* (Schneider, 2011: 89).

I perceive Schneider's thoughts to trouble the linear relationship assumed between 'performance' and 'documentation' in describing the live event as both before and after the development of a document: the text. With regards to *Hamlet*, the text cited within the play such as Hecuba's monologue presents itself as another level, layer or element of 'live', a document performed anew or arguably as part another document. In addition to Schneider's observations, I consider that a 'meantime' (Schneider, 2011: 89) occurs between the writing and performing of Hecuba, and Shakespeare's inclusion of her story within *Hamlet*. Shakespeare's featuring of Hecuba in several plays, such as *Titus Andronicus* written and shown before *Hamlet*, marks her presence in the play as a revival<sup>301</sup>. Although fuelled with new meaning, paralleling the lives of Hamlet's mother and uncle, Hecuba's woes are '*set in play*' [original emphasis] (Schneider, 2011: 90) as live/d again.

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<sup>301</sup> Royal Shakespeare Company, 2017, (accessed: 08/06/17).

The retrieving of Yorick's skull from the graveyard in *Hamlet*, included within Turner's production, delivers a sense of *revival*. The image of the skull, synonymous with the play, encourages a reminiscing of past actors whose hands have held and faced the famous prop. Among others, Laurence Olivier, Jude Law and Michael Sheen have acted as Hamlet; although David Tennant's role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2008 production remains significant because Tennant rehearsed with the skull of André Tchaïkowsky, after he donated his body to science and his head to the company upon his death. Although other actors had previously used the skull, Tennant was the first to use the part onstage, acting with the 'prop' for over twenty performances<sup>302</sup>. Ironically however, whilst permission was being obtained for Tennant to use Tchaïkowsky's skull, he was forced to use another; the same skull held by Edmund Kean in the 1813 production of *Hamlet*<sup>303</sup>. I consider that the use of skulls creates a revival of not only the presence of fans of Shakespeare such as Tchaïkowsky, but moreover actors who have played the difficult part; creating a palimpsestic quality to the production that unites the various renditions cited. Aebischer notes that 'if Yorick's skull is disturbingly polysemous on the page and the stage, it can be equally promiscuous in its signification on screen' (Aebischer, 2004: 93). Indeed, Cumberbatch is pictured with the skull, used as part of the production shots advertising Turner's staging and thus NT screening; although the main image featured Cumberbatch alone, possibly a directorial

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<sup>302</sup> *The Telegraph*, 2008, (accessed: 03/01/16). Although the nature of the skull was not revealed at the time for fear that the spectacle would outshine the performance, the situation was latterly made clear and the skull used within a television dramatization of *Hamlet* for the Royal Shakespeare Company. *The Telegraph*, 2009, (accessed: 21/07/16). Aebischer notes that Mark Rylance was the first to rehearse with Tchaïkowsky's skull in 1989 (Aebischer, 2004: 86).

<sup>303</sup> It was reported that a 'piece of theatre history happened that night on the Stratford stage as David Tennant, a 21st century Hamlet, stared into the empty eye sockets that a nineteenth century Hamlet had used. For those of us watching, a little shiver of connection occurred'. *The Telegraph*, 2009, (accessed: 21/07/16).



decision to free Cumberbatch from too heavy associations with past performances<sup>304</sup>.

Other props and motifs used within Turner's production create a revival of modern history and social times, further demonstrating the relationship between 'performance' and 'documentation' onstage. Hamlet's costumes varied from a soldier uniform to hoodies; in other situations he wore a David Bowie T-shirt and Adidas trainers. Turner's inclusion of a gramophone permitted Hamlet to play Frank Sinatra, and elsewhere Nat King Cole to sing *Nature Boy*. Such temporal movement in materials, visual and aural, from the 1930s and 40s to the 1970s and 80s interrupted any sense of chronological time within the production, and enabled instead an amalgam of memories, revived to create a pastiche of ages or a postmodern montage. Hamlet's love, Ophelia, held a camera throughout the first act of Turner's production, documenting the performance and players simultaneously<sup>305</sup>. The interval, occurring after Ophelia's father has been killed, prompts her breakdown, with the second act seeing a manic Ophelia pulling a trunk around the stage. It is later revealed that the trunk has stored the series of photographs Ophelia has produced in the first act. The photographs work not only as documents of the production, but moreover as a revival of memories and figures lost: notably her father. In much the same way that Hamlet becomes obsessed with the ghostly figure of the King, Turner's direction enables

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<sup>304</sup> National Theatre Live, 2015, (accessed: 14/12/15). Professor David Houston Jones reflected on Mengele's skull that enabled the development of modern forensic science, noting that the presence of the skull at a press conference diminished the significance of the speaker, as though the skull was addressing the audience instead of the speaker: 'the process by which Mengele's remains were identified inaugurated a new forensic sensibility in which it was not the human subject, but rather objects in other words, bodily remains that took center stage'. Forensic Architecture, 2017, (accessed 16/05/17); Jones, D. H., (2017) *Kathryn Smith and the Practices of Forensic Performance: from Jack in Johannesburg to Incident Room*. Presented at: No Way Out: Theatre as a Mediatized Practice, TaPRA Performance and New Technologies Interim Event, London South Bank University.

<sup>305</sup> This is an intertextual reference to Julia Stiles's use of polaroids in Michael Almereyda's *Hamlet* (2000).

a parallel between Ophelia and the images of her father. The relationship between the two characters is enhanced further by the knowledge of their deaths, brought about by mourning for deceased paternal figures. Turner's decision to include more modern forms of documentation supports my considerations that the production highlights palimpsestic revivals and thus a movement between performance and documentation.

### *Regenerate*

I argue that NT Live's streaming of Turner's *Hamlet* enabled a regeneration of the material, therefore extending the life of the performance. As well as *Hamlet* being live-streamed to cinemas in the Barbican Centre, the production was also broadcast across the United Kingdom and around the world. Even several months after the 'live' streaming, Encore screenings were still being shown in several countries such as America, Singapore and Germany, representing the production's reach<sup>306</sup>. I have elsewhere argued that such a demand for screenings indicates not only the popularity of the production, and most likely Cumberbatch as a leading actor<sup>307</sup>; but moreover an interest in live-streaming (Abbott and Read, 2017: 173). Cumberbatch's thanks however, expressed after the production filmed for NT Live and thus screened nationally and internationally, brought into question nature of engagement when considering discrete audiences accessing the production via digital means. Cumberbatch, in a direct address to

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<sup>306</sup> A search of the NT Live website in January 2016 also indicated showings of Turner's *Hamlet* at independent cinemas in Ireland and the Netherlands, Denmark, China, Korea and Japan. National Theatre Live, 2015, (accessed: 14/12/15).

<sup>307</sup> As noted by Julie Sanders, at the time of Cumberbatch's run as Hamlet in 2016 he was an Oscar nominee and 'globally successful *Sherlock* actor', implying the extent of his fanbase (Sanders, 2016: 67).

the NT Live audiences, noted: ‘you’re all in this theatre with us’<sup>308</sup>. Although Cumberbatch was attempting to unite theatre and cinema audiences, his statement seems misdirected. Cinema audiences such as those watching Encore showings would undoubtedly know that Cumberbatch and the cast at the Barbican were not present at the delayed time of showing; indeed the live screening took place towards the end of the production’s run at the venue. Considering Martin Barker’s survey and conclusions on the relevance of liveness within live-streamed, or to use Barker’s phraseology, live casting events, the sense of being ‘live’ and in-the-moment are of great relevance to digital audiences (Barker, 2013: 64). Cumberbatch’s sentiments therefore, not only potentially disrupt cinema viewers from perceiving a sense of liveness; but also demand a theoretical solution as to the popularity of Encore screenings, such as those of *Hamlet* showing months after the initial ‘live screening’. I consider that the answer lies in the nature of live screening itself.

The popularity of live-streaming, and the subsequent regeneration of material permitted, can be evidenced in a previous screening of *Hamlet*, shown in 1964 in America. John Gielgud’s production starred Richard Burton in the leading role, and an experiment enabled the Broadway show to reach over 1000 cinemas across the States. The streaming facility that was described as a ‘miracle’ was Electronovision, with seventeen cameras poised around the Broadway stage that filmed and simultaneously screened Gielgud’s *Hamlet*. In an interview with Richard Burton, he dared to consider that the process could be

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<sup>308</sup> *Hamlet*, By Shakespeare, W., (Dir.) Turner, L., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 15/10/15. Professor Pascale Aebischer has kindly shared with me her experience of ushers distributing collection buckets at the Exeter showing of *Hamlet*, akin to the staged performance’s charity drive, adding to the sense of inclusion expressed by Cumberbatch.

‘epoch’ making<sup>309</sup>. Burton’s statement was indeed correct, especially when considering the popularity of Met Live in the States that in part inspired NT Live; although a ‘transformative new media’ (Worthen, 2010: 127), Electronovision was less revolutionary, most likely as its creator H. William Sargent Jr. suffered ill health prematurely ending the run of success. I consider that a decision by the Wooster Group to include elements of the Richard Burton showing in their version of *Hamlet* regenerated both the material gathered and simultaneously could have revived the popularity of live-streaming theatrical performances, meaning that ‘this long-imagined, exotic future is at last becoming a familiar and even routine present’ (Sullivan, 2017: 629). The Wooster Group’s *Hamlet*, first staged in 2005 four years ahead of the NT Live project’s pilot screening, permitted regeneration of a digital Burton; cited as a ‘repurposing’, channelling the ‘ghost of the legendary 1964 performance’<sup>310</sup>.

More recently, two further showings of *Hamlet* have regenerated and lengthened the ‘life’ of performance via live-streaming: Nicholas Hytner’s 2010 production and Thomas Ostermeier’s in 2008. Ostermeier’s *Hamlet* ran until 2016 and was shown at the Barbican Centre in 2011<sup>311</sup>. Richard Hornby, writing on the production, observed that:

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<sup>309</sup> *YouTube*, 2007, (accessed: 10/06/17). To add to Burton’s claim, David Sabel has acknowledged Electronovision as an inspiration for the NT Live project. Sabel, D., (2011) *NT Live, from research to broadcast*. A lecture by the National Theatre Archive. Presented at: National Theatre Archive, London. It should be noted though, that previous screenings of *Hamlet* had occurred. Laurence Olivier, whilst screening through television his film, had shown *Hamlet* in 1948; and in 1955, Olivier also filmed *Richard III*, which was screened on American televisions in 1956. The audience was estimated at between 25 to 40 million. BFI Screenonline, 2014, (accessed: 16/05/17).

<sup>310</sup> *The Wooster Group*, 2016, (accessed: 20/07/16). Indeed W. B. Worthen references the production notes: ‘According to the program, the Wooster Group production “attempts to reverse the process” of filmed theater, “reconstructing a hypothetical theatre piece from the fragmentary evidence of the edited film, like an archaeologist inferring a temple from a collection of ruins”’ (Worthen, 2008: 308).

<sup>311</sup> Barbican, 2011, (accessed: 18/05/17).

... it was not really a production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* at all, but rather a series of distorted images from our collective unconscious about the play that more than any other seems to haunt the modern world, the kind of nightmare you might have after studying something too long and too hard<sup>312</sup>.

Stephen Purcell, writing in Christie Carson and Peter Kirwan's *Shakespeare and the Digital World: Redefining Scholarship and Practice* (2014), considered that the production felt more realistic when viewed through the live video feeds used onstage, and supported Hornby's noting of the imagistic quality of the performance<sup>313</sup>. The Schaubühne Berlin, staging Ostermeier's production, appears to predict such confusion and write that the production reflects 'Hamlet's progressive loss of touch with reality, his disorientation ...' which are in turn reflected in the acting style<sup>314</sup>. I consider that the live feeds used work as an extension of the acting style, affecting the staging and overall feel of the production through the use of television monitors onstage. In contrast with the regeneration of *Hamlet* or deterioration of the character Hamlet, Hytner's production staged at the National Theatre and screened by NT Live used live screening to project the material to cinemas; rather than directly affecting the acting style of Rory Kinnear playing the Prince. Indeed it is noted by Carson that:

In the international environment of a live satellite broadcast it was film and television conventions that seemed to dominate, and the character of

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<sup>312</sup> *Jstor*, 2012, (accessed: 18/05/17).

<sup>313</sup> *Googlebooks*, 2014, (accessed: 18/05/17).

<sup>314</sup> Schaubühne Berlin, 2008, (accessed: 18/05/17).

Hamlet, as well as Rory Kinnear, was trying to outsmart the expectations of all who viewed him<sup>315</sup>.

Although differing in their styles, both productions' use of streaming proves a further example of post-text paradocumentation. Ostermeier's use of distortion within his staging reflects the confused character of Hamlet, played to audiences nationally and internationally for eight years thereby extending the idea of the 'live' performance. Hytner's *Hamlet*, through the use of live-streaming and filmic qualities of the performance, projected Kinnear, but also arguably established a path for staging further Shakespeare productions as part of the NT Live 'seasons'. I consider that the establishing of the NT Live screening of *Hamlet* at the Barbican was initiated by the former productions of Hytner and Ostermeier; theoretically lengthening the life and impact of the two seasons as well as popularizing the form through the amplification of opportunities for viewing performances.

### *Disrupting Ontologies*

This section will consider in detail audience viewing habits and receptions towards live-streaming, based upon results of surveys distributed at six NT Live performances of Turner's *Hamlet*. My focus within this section is to analyse the 'post-text' experience, arguably lengthening the life of the performance. With regards to documentation, the results from the collected audience surveys indicate that engagements with post-text paradocumentation occur through two main channels: through the buying and archiving of souvenirs such as

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<sup>315</sup> *Googlebooks*, 2014, (accessed: 18/05/17).

programmes; or through seeking further information about the production and/or cast online. Indeed, nearly half of the respondents noted digital means as the vehicle through which post-text paradocumentation (documentation existing beyond the recognized 'live' event) would occur. Interestingly though theatre programmes, whilst the next preferred option to virtual searches, rendered much fewer results with just under a quarter of participants investing in physical documentation. It should be noted however that some NT Live performances will not distribute programmes, but rather a piece of paper with brief details of plot, cast, and upcoming streamed productions<sup>316</sup>. These 'paper programmes', perhaps useful as pre-text paradocumentation, may hold less significance for audience members subsequent to the performance, after which the plot and actors have been revealed. Souvenirs such as programmes are ordinarily well presented using glossy paper and thus lend themselves to cherishing rather than recycling or binning, as could be the case with single leaved information sheets. If the sheets presented at NT Live screenings are seen as inferior through their propensity to perish, online forms of post-text engagement with the screening seem inevitable. To reflect this supposition, 14% of respondents noted that they would consider buying NT Live merchandise post-production, wanting to mark their experience and provide a sense of permanency, thus lengthening the 'life' of the performance through documentation (Abbott and Read, 2017: 185).

Further engagement with post-text paradocumentation occurs through various means, the popularity of the forms possibly dependent upon other factors, to be discussed shortly. Reporting on the performance via digital means, such as tweeting or creating a Facebook status, yielded the highest results at

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<sup>316</sup> The participants noted that they would have bought a physical programme at their screening, were this service an option; as a result, the figures may have altered somewhat.

14%, with an idea to write a longer piece such as a review or online blog entry appealing to only 5% of the respondents. The idea of sharing photos was less popular with fewer than 5% of audiences using this form of documentation; and producing work such as gifs from these photos was an interest for only 3% of those surveyed. Fewer than 3% took photos during the performance itself to share afterwards (Abbott and Read, 2017: 181). Whilst these latter figures seem low in comparison with the numbers of respondents intending to use social media, where adding a photo to a status or tweet is commonplace, the context of the production may have affected the results.

The popularity of the production's leading actor, Cumberbatch, appeared to increase a desire for post-text par documentation, including recording during the performances staged at the Barbican theatre. Cumberbatch, in a response to the flashing of cameras facing him in the auditorium, begged the audiences to stop interacting with media, to be used only to spread his plea<sup>317</sup>. Whilst the cinema audiences watching in a discrete location could not physically affect Cumberbatch's performance, I consider that a factor in the reduced numbers of respondents filming and photographing is a direct result of Cumberbatch's plea to his *digital* audience<sup>318</sup>. Although Cumberbatch protested to the use of camera phones in the theatre, the online community or those viewing from discrete locations were the most affected by his appeal. As such, the NT Live viewers

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<sup>317</sup> Cumberbatch, in his plea to audiences, said that seeing red recording lights during his performance was “mortifying” and that as a result of such interruptions “I can’t give you what I want to give you”. Cumberbatch noted that as he does not use social media, the fans present could put their phones and cameras “to good use”; “tweet, blog and hashtag the s\*\*\* out of this one [his plea] for me”. He noted also that the audience should use their minds to observe productions and warned that such documentary devices would be removed from performances along with their owners. *Evening Standard*, 2015, (accessed: 12/12/15).

<sup>318</sup> The survey indicated that during the production, only seven viewers had taken a photograph of the production during the live-streaming; however it was not determined if the images were taken before the broadcast or during the interval (Abbott and Read, 2017: 180).



watched from this altered con-text, affecting their post-text handling of material also.

A further concept to explain the adversity surrounding photographs within performance, to be used as an example of post-text paradocumentation, lies in an anxiety to alter viewing patterns in relation to technological developments. In *Convergence Culture: Where Old and New Media Collide*, Jenkins highlights the thoughts of MIT political scientist Ithiel de Sola Pool, who published *Technologies of Freedom* in 1993. Pool, when discussing a transition between old and new media, notes a resistance and a struggle for users to change, adapt and develop with technology (Jenkins, 2006: 11). Jenkins, when discussing the aversion to new media, suggests a relationship between users and experience: users of the latest technological developments are notably active and social in their participatory behaviour; whereas established groups are less dynamic and more private in their engagements. I identify a relationship between the age of the viewers, in conjunction with the age of technology; suggesting that newer users are adapting to emerging technologies and that established groups pose a resistance to such habits (Jenkins, 2006: 18). If this assertion is correct, then possibly the low numbers of those surveyed creating gifs, for example, could be explained by a lower number of users adapting new technologies within and after the performance<sup>319</sup>. The creation of gifs can develop only through the use of recording also, which Cumberbatch condemned during the run at the Barbican<sup>320</sup>.

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<sup>319</sup> The survey did not ask for details such as age of consumer, and therefore thoughts surrounding the composition of the audiences are based on observations from myself as researcher. I was absent from the Maltese venue, where the research was kindly facilitated by Dr Toni Sant. This projection of consumer age is therefore also a reflection on the national, rather than international screenings.

<sup>320</sup> The creation of gifs are often taken on a frame by frame basis, altering minute details to generate meaning anew, represented as a 'comic book aesthetic'. Radar, 2014, (accessed: 19/05/17).

Therefore low numbers of photographic documentation in this regard may be explained by the composition of audience members at the six screenings, as well as influences of the leading actor penetrating digital showings. Whilst not writing on Cumberbatch's plea, Jenkins's conclusion reflects the mixed responses to documentation: 'consumers ... are perplexed by what they see as mixed signals about how much and what kinds of participation they can enjoy' (Jenkins, 2006: 24). The various responses to and diversity of forms of post-text paradocumentation within the live screened performances of *Hamlet* echoes the confusion highlighted by Jenkins.

Aims and intentions of viewing are other factors in determining use and application of post-text paradocumentation in order to lengthen the life of performance. The notion of the producing consumer or 'prosumer' alters the viewing habits and thus documentation of performances, where users wish to access the performance via a proliferation of forms that are not always viable. Daisy Abbott, when writing on NT Live's *Coriolanus* (2014), notes that 'the very mechanism that allowed the play to become so widely accessed (through both official screenings and illegal recordings) has an effect on the ways in which the play has been received and interpreted, and creatively reimaged by fans'<sup>321</sup>. Whilst I will not discuss fandom specifically, I will acknowledge its presence in affecting patterns of viewing behaviour, particularly in relation to documentation of performance. Where Abbott's writing on *Coriolanus* starred Tom Hiddleston in the leading role, Cumberbatch's NT Live debut was in Danny Boyle's *Frankenstein*, shown at the National Theatre in 2011. Fans reacted to the

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<sup>321</sup> Radar, 2015, (accessed: 19/05/17).

broadcast, requesting a more permanent reminder of the performance. NT Live subsequently responded, stating:

We appreciate there is a huge amount of interest in making the broadcast available on DVD but currently this is not the wish of the artists involved. [...] If you are a fan of anyone involved in the creation of *Frankenstein* or the National Theatre, we would ask that you respect their wishes and decision, and hope that you will continue to support National Theatre Live in your local cinema<sup>322</sup>.

Gifs and the creation of other material developed by fans that extend the life of these performances is arguably a response to NT Live's refusal to sell DVDs of *Frankenstein*<sup>323</sup>, or other productions such as *Coriolanus* or *Hamlet*.

Furthermore, Jenkins notes that:

Fans have always been early adopters of new media technologies: their fascination with fictional universes often inspires new forms of cultural production [...] Fans are the most active segment of the media audience, one that refuses to accept simply what they are given, but rather insists on the right to become full participants (Jenkins, 2006: 153).

Jenkins's observation that fans insist on the 'right to become full participants' (Jenkins, 2006: 153) emphasizes the role of the 'prosumer' who produces content

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<sup>322</sup> National Theatre Live, 2012, (accessed: 14/12/15).

<sup>323</sup> In refusing to release DVDs of performances, NT Live continue to respect the rights and wishes of the artists involved. Contrastingly, Richard Burton's *Electronovision* experiment was reproduced as a recording, despite the objections of the lead actor (Osborne, 2006: 52).

as well as consumes; additionally highlighting the role of the new media user who documents and performs anew via digital participation.

I consider that the lack of official post-text documentation from NT Live with regards to *Frankenstein* inspired further paradowumentation surrounding the performances of *Hamlet*, disrupting the ontology of performance and documentation. Melvyn Bragg, during his interview with Cumberbatch, notes that ‘such is his [Cumberbatch’s] profile, the actor has drawn new audiences to the play from his legions of fans across the world’<sup>324</sup>. Arguably the fans cited by Bragg were also those who unsuccessfully demanded DVDs of *Frankenstein*, wanting a souvenir of the performance. NT Live’s refusal to produce such official documentation created not only unrest within digital communities but also inspired further creation. I suggest that the post-text documentation of *Frankenstein* worked simultaneously as pre-text documentation promoting the performances of *Hamlet*. Whilst the popularity of the lead actor is undeniable, the quest for something unattainable worked to drive demand, as well as the desire to participate within the spectacle. Although the survey yielded only a small number of viewers who were both fans of the play and fans of Cumberbatch, out of the larger group, fans of Cumberbatch participated more in pre-text, con-text and post-text paradowumentation (Abbott and Read, 2017: 184)<sup>325</sup>. For example, nearly 10% sought information on the NT Live website before attending the live screening; as well as reading and writing about the performance on social media both before and after viewing the production. By comparison, fans of the play were much less likely to search online material after

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<sup>324</sup> *Hamlet*, By Shakespeare, W., (Dir.) Turner, L., London: Barbican Centre, date of performance: 15/10/15.

<sup>325</sup> The results suggest that more viewers were fans of Cumberbatch than fans of Hamlet at 34% compared with 29% respectively (Abbott and Read, 2017: 183).

they viewed the performance. Thus fans of Cumberbatch are much more likely to digitally engage and contribute to paradocumentation, arguably because of their prior involvement and enthusiasm for the actor; possibly quashed by NT Live four years earlier during the presentation of *Frankenstein*. Jenkins notes that, ‘audiences, empowered by these new technologies, occupying a space at the intersection between old and new media, are demanding the right to participate within culture’ (Jenkins, 2006: 24). Whilst photography represents an older form of media compared to tumblr, the online community through which NT Live’s statement on production DVDs was issued, Jenkins’s considerations that the meeting point between these outlets represents the intersection of participation echoes my argument for paradocumentation, working between performance and documentation. I consider that the ways of viewing the relationship between performance and documentation are disrupted due to developments such as live-streaming. The ‘space’ or ‘intersection’ identified by Jenkins (Jenkins, 2006: 24), akin to my notion of ‘unmarked liveness’, works as the zone in which a merging of states can occur. It is in this zone or space where the lengthening, or cycling, of material is enabled, aided through the use of media.

This chapter has questioned the fading of performance through advocating a revival of *Hamlet* and further a regeneration of viewing habits instigated by live-streaming. The NT Live streaming of Turner’s *Hamlet*, I argue, disrupted the ontological states of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’; discussed with regards to paradocumentation. My focus specifically on the pre-text and post-text materials began with a discussion of photographs, rehearsal shots, used as ‘teaser’ material ahead of the streamed performance. I consider that the

documents, shown before the performance although part of the cinematic event, enable a lengthening of the ‘life’ of performance through a disruption of their state; when shown as Encore screenings, the material occurs after the live showing has been streamed, but before their display to Encore audience members.

The diverse roles of the photographs were mirrored in the varying roles of the audience members at the Barbican Centre. The NT Live performance effectively split the ‘live’ viewers theoretically, rather than physically; as only a few floors separated the audience who were all encompassed within the arts venue. Likewise, Cumberbatch was divided between these viewers, with the digital representation of the actor working as a marker upon which the physical could be identified. In considering the nature of Turner’s production specifically, through the inclusion of Hecuba to act as a parallel of Hamlet’s life, I argue that the production focuses upon the notion of revival. Highlighting Schneider’s insight that ‘the live is a troubling trace of a precedent text’ (Schneider, 2011: 89), I argue that the repeated inclusion of Hecuba within Shakespeare plays creates a revival of not only King Priam and the deceased King of Denmark, but moreover a remembering of past traces or scripts, performing anew. Similarly, Turner’s use of the skull, the prop most obviously associated with *Hamlet*, revived past leading actors through Cumberbatch’s interaction<sup>326</sup>. Turner’s use of more modern history such as gramophones created a revival of various times that worked together to create a layering of lives; epitomized through the literal

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<sup>326</sup> See also Marvin Carlson’s *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (2003). He states that ‘Our iconic memories are haunted by *Hamlet*. Who does not immediately recognize, in whatever pictorial style he may appear, the dark habited young man gazing contemplatively into the sightless eyes of a skull he is holding ... ‘ (Carlson, 2003: 78).

retelling of the lives of the characters shown through Ophelia's photographs taken onstage and revealed prior to her suicide.

I argue that a regeneration of material is created through the use of live-streaming, and this argument formed the basis of the survey discussed in the latter half of the chapter. Whilst the concept of live-streaming is not a new form of technology, evidenced through Electronovision and Burton's starring in a cinematic staging of *Hamlet* in 1964, crucially revived through the Wooster Groups's staging of *Hamlet* several decades later; I argue that more recent experiments with live-streaming provoked further engagement with *Hamlet*: Thomas Ostermeier and Nicholas Hytner's stagings of *Hamlet* used live-streaming within and to frame the performance respectively, shown at the Barbican and at the National Theatre, projected also through NT Live. The meeting of these performances through live-streaming, and use of venue, arguably prompted a regeneration of NT Live, who increasingly stream from discrete venues such as the Barbican. The development of the NT Live project coincided with the development of Cumberbatch as leading actor. I argue that his involvement with *Frankenstein* in 2011 acted as an example of pre-text paradocumentation ahead of *Hamlet*. Interest in Cumberbatch was so great that the actor made a plea to stop the audience documenting, as he was irritated by the constant use of mobile phones to record his performances. Subsequently, according to the results of audience surveys, a disrupted sense of viewing occurred; whereby interaction with such forms of documentation decreased. Cumberbatch's argument that all viewers of *Hamlet* were part of the production, live, at the Barbican, arguably pacified fans that watched in record numbers. Indeed the media, in realising the joint success of both the staged and screened

versions of the production, revised their documentation of the performance from *Hamlet* to ‘CumberHamlet’<sup>327</sup>. This regeneration of *Hamlet* will undoubtedly lengthen the life of not only fan’s interest in Cumberbatch, or academic interest in various revivals of the production; but moreover prove an increased interest in the phenomenon of live-streaming.

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<sup>327</sup> *Twitter*, 2013, (accessed: 04/01/16).



## CONCLUSION

### RECYCLE AND RESUBLIMATE

#### *Return*

This thesis has ‘returned’ to the National Theatre of 2006, where the beginnings of live-streaming within performance were trialled by Katie Mitchell. After a business proposition by David Sabel, NT live flourished and escalated from a pilot into a ‘season’ in 2009-2010,<sup>328</sup> following Mitchell’s varied techniques of presenting performance. The idea of live-streaming, not only within performance as in Mitchell’s work, but *of* the performance itself, has subsequently revolutionised viewing habits of theatre audiences; propelling the success of the National Theatre and its move towards technological innovation. Significantly, other theatres such as the Barbican, and various streaming companies around the United Kingdom and abroad, have since been part of this revolution.

My sense in ‘returning’ and consolidating a decade of digital work was to enable an analysis of the development of media, both at the National Theatre, and beyond. The thesis has been concerned with tracing the linearity of this development, evidenced through a chronology of case studies. However, more significantly my thoughts to realign are inspired by a post-structuralist influence, affecting the format of the thesis in demonstrating a cycling process; whereby the latter chapters consider the next revolution offered by media, and the latest

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<sup>328</sup> ‘The story is that Nick’s brother, Richard, had done a workshop on my MBA course at Cambridge. I wrote directly to Nick to tell him I had met Richard and my background and asked for a meeting to discuss a potential placement on which to base my dissertation and he suggested he was interested in the concept of live cinema broadcasts’. Sabel, D., (2017) *RE: Update on NT Live research*, [email] (received 21/11/17).

techniques exhibited by Mitchell and NT Live in a ‘return’ to the *new*. My conclusion demonstrates the interrelations between the chapters, and across the chapters, that aim to mark a cycling movement between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’. I describe this area identified as *between*; a zone of ‘unmarked liveness’, which has been developed throughout the thesis. This conclusion, in enabling a ‘recycling’ of material, ultimately allows for reflection and prompts a ‘resublimation’: I suggest opportunities for further research that equally demonstrate the potential of live-streaming in affecting the theoretical relationship between ‘performance and documentation’, indicating the moving ontology between the two states and exposing the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’.

#### *Reconstruct: Reform and Rewrite*

*Reform* and *Rewrite* work through two plays that use writing to present material anew, and their reconstructed sense of display and output sit in distinction from previous works by the director and playwright, as well as the National Theatre. The endeavour of Mitchell in creating a media based performance in order to best display Virginia Woolf’s fragmented novel marked a change in Mitchell’s own practice and a movement away from previous work that she had directed at the National Theatre. Whilst Alan Bennett’s writing was shown as systematic through his presentation of the *habit* of his art, the process of rewriting his edits resulted in a reconstruction of not only the format of his play, but moreover an altered path of display through the play’s inclusion in the first NT Live ‘season’. The work of Mitchell and Bennett shows adaptation, and crucially, a reconstruction of history: Woolf’s text, in part a recollection of her own path to adulthood dealing with both love and loss, shows similar themes as exposed by

Bennett; who reconstructs the path of history through forging a meeting between W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten. Whilst both Mitchell and Bennett work from existing documents to create performances anew, a focus on writing from omitted material that nevertheless speaks as ‘live’ is a key focus within *Reconstruction*.

As Woolf’s biographer noted the constant changes that were made to the novelist’s texts<sup>329</sup>, a similar concern with adaptation can be attributed to Mitchell, who had considered several times how to stage *The Waves*. Likewise Bennett, working on his personal investment in the lives of Auden and Britten resulting from his failure to capitalise upon meeting the artists during his years at Oxford, was encouraged to write and rewrite his play. Both artists adapted and altered their work, demonstrated in their use of research. Such was the interest in Humphrey Carpenter, the biographer of both Auden and Britten, that Bennett included him within *The Habit of Art* (2010), narrating and acting as a vehicle between the actors and audiences. In citing the work of others in his text, Bennett creates another layer of performance, or a ‘documentation’ of a previous artwork. Citations within both *The Habit of Art* (from *Death in Venice* and *The Tempest*) as well as Woolf’s text forming Mitchell’s staging, creates a palimpsest of ‘documentation’. In contrast with *The Habit of Art*, although *Waves* was not subject to rigorous streaming itself,<sup>330</sup> the incarnations of several stagings within each performance create another parallel between *Waves* (2006) and the live-streamed and repeated Bennett play.

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<sup>329</sup> *The Guardian*, 2003, (accessed: 22/08/15).

<sup>330</sup> Whilst *Waves* was not streamed via NT Live or another streaming facility, there were several runs of the production. In addition to its return to the National Theatre, *Waves* has toured internationally subsequent to its initial opening at the arts venue. *The Agency*, 2017, (accessed 04/09/17).

In addition to the focus on writing, the use of props within both *Waves* and *The Habit of Art* unite the performances. Mitchell's use of Foley actors resulted in props from the rehearsal room being found onstage during the run at the National Theatre; whilst Bennett's path to performance was dissimilar to Mitchell's, his rewriting resulted in the rehearsal room itself being reconstructed as the set of the performance, working as a play within a play. The set of 'Caliban's Day' strewn across the stage, the relics of Auden's digs, filled with scores and texts, were submerged within the layers of staging notes from 'Rehearsal Room 1'. The layering of the documents used within both *Waves* and *The Habit of Art* work in contrast to the advanced use of live-streaming; in *Waves* the documents formed onstage, such as photographs of a dinner scene, are recalled in the performance, as though the characters are flicking through an album. The nature of the construction onstage within *The Habit of Art* and *Waves* enabled a subsequent reconstruction for the audience; the talking furniture within Bennett's play facilitates further ideas on the life of Auden, the use of device inspired by Hytner's edits of Bennett's work that are reflected throughout the narrative. The use of Foley actors in *Waves* allowed for a reconstruction of design and a new vantage point for the audience; arguably a screening within a play displayed by the projector above stage.

The adapted paths of performance for Mitchell and Bennett altered the work of the director and playwright. Whilst Bennett has expressed that he made no changes to his work to accommodate live-streaming, his plays have been readily incorporated into NT Live 'seasons'; with *The Habit of Art* being shown as an Encore in part of the National Theatre at 50 celebrations<sup>331</sup>. Mitchell's

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<sup>331</sup> National Theatre Live, 2013, (accessed: 05/09/17).

work in *Waves* has been described as a seminal moment in her career and altered her own habits of presenting art thereafter. Indeed, whilst her remaining two years at the National Theatre included work for children, reflected upon during later chapters of this thesis, two other works revitalised *Waves* and moved her approach and experiments with media further still, as discussed in *Repeat*. Significantly, I would argue that both *Waves* and *The Habit of Art* altered the perception of the beacon venue due to their use of live-streaming; effectively creating another layer of the ‘performance’ through an incorporation of simultaneous recording working as ‘documentation’. The use of streaming also marks the National Theatre as a place of technological innovation and a venue that incorporates mixed genres and post-modern display. Dan Rebellato’s observation that *Waves* was a production ‘one expects to see in a venue associated with performance art, not so much England’s national theatre company’<sup>332</sup> could also be translated to the use of live projection in reference to the work of Bennett. In this regard my use of the terms *Reform* and *Rewrite* refer ultimately to the *Reconstruction* work at the National Theatre, and the venue’s viewings in terms of both audiences and perceptions, thereafter.

#### *Redevelop: Repeat and Reborn*

*Repeat* and *Reborn* highlight a redevelopment as well as a questioning of an established form. In Mitchell’s media work, the repeated use of devices and media display were repeated but developed from her initial output, *Waves*, in her subsequent work, ...*Some trace of her* (2008). With regards to NT Live, the expanding body of work shown through the subsequent NT Live ‘seasons’

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<sup>332</sup> *Myilibrary*, 2013, (accessed: 16/06/16).

reflects the development of the project, where increasingly work is produced beyond the National Theatre, as discussed in *Revive*. Whilst the focus within *Repeat* was intermedia, and the relationship between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, as well as *Attempts on her life* (2007) that was shown at the National Theatre between Mitchell's two other media productions; *Reborn* focuses upon the idea of what I argue as an 'aNTi Live'. Alongside intermedia, which indicates the merging of content, my term 'aNTi Live' considers the ontological nature of the live with regards to 'performance' and 'documentation', and is discussed in relation to NT Live and the NT Archives. A focus of *Reborn* is the stages of the Houses of Parliament and the house of the National Theatre, both working as living archives that perform and document simultaneously, relating to the concept of 'inter' and speaking to the idea of redevelopment, or repetition, which creates a cycling of material. *Reborn* thus questions the nature of life and death in parallel with 'performance' and 'documentation'; suggesting that the 'live' is negated when set against the cyclical relationship offered from live-streaming: a never not live, or rather an 'aNTi Live'.

The use of documentation to fuel writing, direction and output aided the redevelopment of not only the body of Mitchell and NT Live's work, but it also informed the creation of ...*Some trace of her* and *This House* (2013). Playwright James Graham's research proved relentless with constant revisions and questions asked of him throughout the rehearsal process, mirroring the work of the Clerks in the Houses in consulting Erskine May, their only known document on the running of Parliament. Likewise Mitchell, reflecting upon her work on *Waves*, did not feel that her production was ever finished. In much the same way that Graham revised drafts of his script, ...*Some trace of her* is arguably a revised

version of *Waves*, demonstrated in the publications of the two books that document the script and stills created during the performances. In the same way that the house of the National Theatre restaged *Waves*, effectively redeveloping and repeating a performance, or documenting a version of the performance played again; the Houses stage performances in the chamber, as well as the archives, the keeper of Erskine May<sup>333</sup>. The notion of the ‘live’ is displaced via the *continued* liveness or performances of documents such as Erskine May, the script of *This House*; or the restaging and publication of *Waves* displayed in conjunction with that of ...*Some trace of her*. The addition of live-streaming, such as the performance and subsequent Encore showings of *This House*, provide a rebirth of the ‘live’, an extension or a continuous notion of a live(s) as a repeating or redeveloped presentation.

The idea of time is relevant to both *Repeat* and *Reborn*. The redeveloped idea of freezing the live feed, originally creating the idea of photographs within *Waves*, was used to demonstrate a seizure in ...*Some trace of her*. The notion of time is altered and the idea of the ‘live’ is fragmented by stopping the stream. I consider that the production straddles between ‘performance’ (in terms of staging) and ‘document’ (in terms of scene) in relation to these photographs, with time further confused when the projection returns to real time playing. Within *This House*, the idea of life and death are constant themes twinned with the metaphorical death of the Labour party and rise or rebirth of the Tories under Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher’s death, occurring during the run of *This House* at the National Theatre, holds significance in that Encore screenings, termed also as NT Live, theatrically permit her rebirth in an endless display of liveness. *The*

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<sup>333</sup> The letters of Erskine May are held within the House of Lords Records Office, the Parliamentary Archives. Parliament, 2017, (accessed: 04/08/17).

*Vote*, working as a redeveloped version of Graham's political plays, was screened live on television, demonstrating a move towards the expansion of streaming as discussed in *Revive*. As with the Labour party's desperation to stop the clock on British politics in the hung parliament of 1974-1979 where ironically Big Ben stopped working, paralleled by the chimes marking the end of *The Vote* (2015) during the 2015 election, a stopping of time was announced: a determination to halt the live. Echoing the notion of 'aNTi Live', a large number of viewers watched *The Vote* through television's catch up services, proving an extension of time, and creating a relationship between the then documented version of the live performance, and a redeveloped live. As Graham attempts to create timeless political and allegorical work, so Mitchell's body of media marks her passage and development as a director.

#### *Regenerate: Relive and Revive*

*Regenerate* infers a new generation of screening and display: a rebranding or reworking. In these case studies, regeneration is detected from a movement between places, exhibited through, for example, Mitchell's career path which follows a trajectory from the National Theatre to other venues abroad. With regards to NT Live, the regeneration of the project relates to the increasingly active and outward movement of streaming. Although previous productions have been screened from discrete locations, the decision to stream a production that included a popular cast member from a prior NT Live/National Theatre production, implies a following from theatres reaching beyond the scope of the south London venue. Whilst the concept of *Revive* refers to the revival of *Hamlet* detailed in response to Melvyn Bragg's assertion of its status as a fading play; I



want to argue further that the development of Benedict Cumberbatch's role as an NT Live actor was revived and regenerated through the screening of *Hamlet* (2015). Cumberbatch's revival as a leading actor within an internationally screened production, and his progressing from *Frankenstein* in 2011 to *Hamlet* in 2015, enhanced not only his popularity as an actor but moreover his place within the rise of NT Live, which has developed beyond the confines of the National Theatre, beyond just *NT Live*. My focus in *Relive* similarly considers the shifting of work surrounding the National Theatre: Mitchell's return to the National Theatre coincided with the showing of media work the *Forbidden Zone* (2016) at the Barbican. Mitchell's return to the National Theatre, although significant, did not utilise the techniques that arguably escalated the popularity of the director and possibly the demand for her to return to the United Kingdom. The idea of reliving not only mirrors Mitchell's movement as international director, in conjunction with the concept of regeneration that marks her development; but more keenly speaks to the content and display of the *Forbidden Zone* that moves between times to create from documentation. The various uses of documentation within performances, illustrated through the use of photographs for example in both the *Forbidden Zone* and *Hamlet*, supports the term 'paradocumentation'; a holistic concept that cites 'performance' and 'documentation' at every level of the performance process. The productions evidence that the use of live-streaming disrupts the notion of a singular 'live', prompting an investigation into reliving and reviving indicating a regenerating of the term live.

In *Relive* and *Revive*, I question the ontological integrity of the 'live'. I want to compare the live *screening* before the live *staging* of Mitchell's the *Forbidden Zone* with the simultaneous staging and screening of Turner's *Hamlet*,

subsequently shown at Encore screenings by NT Live. Despite the disparity in timings and locations, both the screening and staging of the *Forbidden Zone*, as well as the various renditions of Cumberbatch in *Hamlet*, are considered as ‘live’, although working from documented footage to generate material anew. For example, the archival resource that enabled a remount from the Salzburg Festival’s staging of the *Forbidden Zone*, documenting the staging and filming of the production, became integral to the Barbican’s subsequent display. I consider that the term ‘paradocumentation’ can be used as a negotiation, describing both the documented footage as well as illustrating its capacity as performance anew, shown within a live setting. Likewise, the splitting of the ‘live’ between the Barbican cinema and theatre created various levels of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’, with the digital Cumberbatch appearing as live via streaming, despite his physical presence a few floors above. The concept of regeneration works as an allegory for the various incarnations of performance and documentation evoked via live-streaming.

I apply the notion of paradocumentation to the screening and staging of the *Forbidden Zone*, in addition to the NT Live performances of *Hamlet*. The screening shown at the Barbican in 2014, live-streamed from Salzburg, arguably works as a pre-text to the staging displayed in 2016 at the same venue. In much the same way that I have argued the production of *Frankenstein* worked as a pre-text for *Hamlet* in engaging fans of Cumberbatch to view the production, a desire to watch a staged rather than screened live version of Mitchell’s the *Forbidden Zone* possibly increased popularity and demand. In this regard, the staged version of the *Forbidden Zone* works as a post-text to the screened version, extending the ‘life’ and liveness of the performance through a regeneration of documentation.

Although the relived material gathered from the live screening aided the staging of the *Forbidden Zone*, help was also provided from the use of preview screens onstage. The screens, used by the technical crew throughout the production, illustrate both current and upcoming shots enabling a navigation system for the filming. I compare the screens used by the technical crew to the post-text documentation of *Hamlet*, described by Abbott as a comic book aesthetic<sup>334</sup>. As the screened shots enabled a regeneration of the *Forbidden Zone*, working from documentation to performance, the revival of shots from the screenings and stagings of *Hamlet* created performance anew via the documentation generated by fans. The online community who devised gifs that extended the life of the performance beyond the discrete timing and location of showing at the Barbican created a post-text performance, a revived performance based on documentation.

*Katie Mitchell: Reform, Repeat, Relive*

The use of technology, specifically live-streaming proved highly significant for the development of Mitchell's work. Live-streaming and the use of video reformed Woolf's novel, enabling the text and various lines of thought to be expressed simultaneously. The technique was repeated within ...*Some trace of her*, and the increasing use of streaming within enables a tracing of the links between the body of Mitchell's media work. Whilst the use of props and Foley actors has remained within Mitchell's productions such as the *Forbidden Zone*, their functions have adapted; within the Barbican production very few actors doubled their roles to work as recording artists and actors, working instead in stage/screen parts. Likewise the use of bibles to indicate movements within each

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<sup>334</sup> Radar, 2014, (accessed: 19/05/17).

production altered from paper notes to digital preview screens, accessed by the recording technical crew in the *Forbidden Zone*. Freezing the live stream for various purposes runs as a thread between the productions: suggesting the creation of photographs; the panic involved in an epileptic fit; and illustrating the movement of time where archival footage as a document interrupts the ‘performance’ of the live stream. The use of flashbacks within the *Forbidden Zone* further disrupts the notion of the ‘live’ within performance; working as another example of the changing relationship between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ as instigated by Mitchell’s streamed live media.

The beacon venue of the National Theatre facilitated Mitchell’s experiments with media that aimed to alter the reading of a text; but also encouraged a mixed genre where radio play met cinema, arguably developing into feature length film beyond the south London venue. Whilst the concept of live-streaming within performance was not new, Mitchell’s use in demonstrating the construction of the media moved a reforming of a text into regeneration of a technique and a rebranding of the director. The screening before staging of the *Forbidden Zone* at the Barbican reflects Mitchell’s alteration of media display, which in *Waves* focused on the creation of the work intended for projection. In a shift, from the projector making sense of Mitchell’s jigsaw below stage, to the screened production working as a focus rather than the staged production, the renewed efforts of Mitchell’s company in prioritizing the filmed elements of her media work becomes evident: effectively the screen now becomes the stage.

*NT Live: Rewrite, Reborn, Revive*

*The Habit of Art*, *This House* and *Hamlet* manipulated documentation, evidenced through their writing, themes and presentation as NT Live performances.

Playwrights Bennett and Graham rewrote history in the forming of their work, constantly altering writing throughout the rehearsal stages. As with Turner's production of *Hamlet* that spoke to other significant past renditions in citing key props such as the skull, working from archives forms a meeting of the past and present described through biographical references. Graham's fastidious searching of Parliament's archives revealed not only important narratives to be included in the arc of the play, but also an interest in the archives themselves; mirrored by Bennett's eventual inclusion of W. H. Auden and Benjamin Britten's biographer as a central character within *The Habit of Art*. Auden's preoccupation with writing is significant within the style of the performance, where documents of past poems and scores are strewn across his Oxford accommodation, an integral part of Hytner's set. Within *This House*, the use of the chalk board within the performance to indicate voting functions as a working document missing from the parliamentary archives: statistical evidence of the downfall of the Labour party and the political struggle of a hung parliament at the end of the seventies. Turner's *Hamlet* included the use of photographs, literally documenting the lives of Ophelia and her family, revealed before her suicide; marking both her time and her untimely end. Equally the omitted sections of the archives proved useful within Bennett's writing, working from conjecture and supposition to create a fictional meeting between the two artists; with Graham likewise inspired to write conversations that were never documented for fear of being ousted by political parties. The original status of NT Live as separated from the NT Archives,

highlighted within the thesis, echoes the nature of documents as unwritten, or unmarked, but nevertheless ‘live’.

The various iterations of productions or layers of represented material worked as though documents performing anew, enhanced by the NT Live project. Director Hytner’s queries to playwright Bennett were included within the stages of writing, evolving into a ‘director’ and ‘playwright’ discussing the staging of the performance based around the life of Auden and Britten, ‘Caliban’s Day’. The use of the play in a play structure, seen within *The Habit of Art* where the rehearsal room for ‘Caliban’s Day’ became the set for Bennett’s production, allowed another ‘level’ of performance. The idea of a play within a play used by William Shakespeare in *Hamlet*, was literally *staged*, onstage, within Turner’s interpretation, enabling a sense of subtext for the audience similar to *The Habit of Art*. Whilst Graham’s work did not use a play in a play structure within *This House*, some audience members of the Olivier became part of the staging; sitting in the chamber along seating stage left and right, acting as politicians in session. In a sense, viewers in the Olivier saw an audience onstage watching the action; doubling the sense of representation and layering of performance akin to the metatheatrical concept exhibited within both *The Habit of Art* and *Hamlet*. The nature of these levels as divided parts or various documented performances is enhanced by the use of live-streaming, where the streaming itself is presented at various locations and/or times, later represented or revived through subsequent Encore screenings. Whilst *The Habit of Art*, *This House* and *Hamlet* have all been revived and presented as Encore screenings beyond their (NT) Live showing, Cumberbatch’s divided presentation as digital

and physical Hamlet within the Barbican Centre emphasises the various strata and layers of the live.

The 'live' showings of National Theatre productions has evolved due to the NT Live project, increasing the availability and accessibility of performances shown in the country and around the world. Richard Eyre's speech, used within *The Habit of Art*, argues that upon its opening the National Theatre ought to close; despite years of efforts to create and site a theatre for the nation (Bennett, 2016: 506). The renaming of the National's theatres, such as the Cottesloe that housed the premier of *This House*, the addition of performance spaces and the revival of productions as part of the NT at 50 season (accompanied by an app for online users), demonstrate the development of the National Theatre. NT Live, which is a decade old, has impacted greatly upon this development, arguably documenting the latest moves and contributions to global theatre with over forty countries presenting NT Live performances<sup>335</sup>. My writing on the Barbican Centre marks the outward move by the National Theatre in achieving impact in discrete locations and institutions; although the houses of the National Theatre have adapted to include technology such as the live-streaming facilities, again archiving and marking the progression of the theatre<sup>336</sup>; streaming beyond the National, north of the river within another large arts organisation such as the Barbican, enables a development of the National's history through other arts venues. Online viewings and manipulations of media such as the extensive use streaming and recording of Cumberbatch within *Hamlet* not only shift the sense

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<sup>335</sup> National Theatre Live, 2017, (accessed: 17/08/17).

<sup>336</sup> The National Theatre's *The Coast of Utopia* (2002) resulted in the creation of the National Theatre's Video Department, through the production's use of 3D designs, modeling and projection. Private interview, Lee, E., 20/08/15. Subsequently the use of technology within performances has developed; with productions such as *wonder.land* (2016) with its use of techniques such as motion capture, and *Ugly Lies the Bone* (2017) with its use of virtual reality. Wonder.land, 2017, (accessed: 06/09/17); National Theatre, 2017, (accessed: 06/09/17).

of the ‘live’ within these institutions (*Hamlet* is arguably a live performance for the National Theatre as much as for the Barbican), but moreover alter the nature of the live and the genre of live performance as an amalgamation of theatre, film and cinema. The nation’s perception of the live, as documented via NT Live, is arguably now dictated by the project; as cinemas and various organisations increasingly contribute to the live-streaming of varying types of artistic performances and endeavours that appear to have permanently altered audiences’ perceptions of theatre and art<sup>337</sup>.

#### *The zone of ‘Unmarked Liveness’*

I have been concerned with the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ and its development throughout this thesis. The zone has been identified in the individual productions cited with the case studies of Mitchell’s media work and the NT Live project, both using live-streaming to enhance their performances. The zone represents the area between performance and documentation, an unmarked area that metaphorically moves between the previously considered binary states. The progression and development of live-streaming within Mitchell’s media display exhibits what I claim to be evidence of an ‘unmarked liveness’: such as the area between the projector and the Foley actors in *Waves*, the evidence of similar devices used between *Waves* and ...*Some trace of her*, or the interrupted notion of time in performance using archival and regenerated material within the *Forbidden Zone*. Her work also represents an advancement of form that shifts between theatre, video and film. Mitchell’s productions evoke a sense of liveness

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<sup>337</sup> At the time of writing an online search reveals that Odeon are screening not only several productions from institutions such as NT Live, the Royal Opera, and the Met Opera; but also performances such as *We Are X* (2017), a feature on the rock band X Japan, whose producer is to appear live after the documentary for a screened question and answer session. Odeon, 2017, (accessed: 06/09/17).



within essentially cinematic relays, mirrored within my analysis of the NT Live project. Initial experimentation with live-streaming in this country largely began at the National Theatre; and I would argue that this move towards technology revolutionized its image and status as a beacon venue. Not only did the shift towards live-streaming mark the making of Mitchell, more prolifically abroad and in Europe than in the United Kingdom, the significance of the National Theatre was heightened through the increased availability of its productions. Works such as *The Habit of Art*, *This House* and *Hamlet* mark the National Theatre as permanently 'live', with Encore screenings and a move towards digital theatre an example of a post-text form of documentation. My concern with performance and documentation as intertwined is inspired by Mitchell's work and in particular the streaming of NT Live performances that document the path of the National Theatre in creating a renewed presence through branding their documented performances as 'live'; a concern driven by the sense that these innovations cannot be accurately described using conventional understandings of the terms 'performance' and 'documentation'.

A developing theme within this thesis that has advanced the thinking behind the 'unmarked liveness' is death, and its relevance to both performance and documentation in the light of live-streaming. The death of characters onstage such as Percival in *Waves* presents an interesting sense of display. Due to Mitchell's use of Foleys, the actors are present onstage throughout, regardless of their use or disuse within key scenes. The replaying of the photographs captured on the projector screen to reflect Percival's death create a disrupted sense of liveness, as an audience understand his passing within the narrative yet witness his uncanny 'rebirth' through Mitchell's use of live-streaming, accompanied by

his physical body working onstage below<sup>338</sup>. The *Forbidden Zone* likewise creates a sense of fragmentation with regards to the ‘live’; the actor playing Clara, after her suicide scene, is seen exiting stage right with a towel on her wet hair, drying off after being submerged in the garden pool drowning scene. Her ‘reincarnation’ on show to the audience disrupts the narrative shown on the projector screen moments previously. Similarly within *The Habit of Art*, Bennett’s central characters of Auden and Britten are resurrected with their deaths openly discussed onstage through the use of their biographer, Humphrey Carpenter. In a passage reflecting on the death of the artists, Carpenter’s tenses move between past, present and future, discussing the past deaths of Auden and Britten in the future of the present moment. The replaying of the production through Encore screenings theoretically troubles the death of the artists, as identified in relation to *This House*, where the live-streaming of the production metaphorically prevented the death of the former Prime Minister, Thatcher. The deaths of politicians during the period of the 1974-1979 hung parliament are paralleled with the death of the Labour Party, echoed within the coalition government that occurred after Graham’s television streaming, *The Vote*. The need to revitalise British politics as inferred within Graham’s outputs is shown through a desperation to stop time; a plea demanded by Bragg when discussing the fading nature of *Hamlet*. Death plays a key role within Shakespeare’s tragedy, beginning with the murder and ghostly return of the King of Denmark. Whilst in Turner’s production the image of the King faded, along with the body of his son, NT Live’s streaming created a mass of images reviving the actors,

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<sup>338</sup> The unmarked passages between the body of Mitchell’s work as described in my analysis of ...*Some trace of her* demonstrate further examples of the connectedness between productions identified through Mitchell’s use of techniques and cast, creating a sense of familiarity and a sense of ‘unmarked liveness’ between outputs.

reanimating and extending the ‘life’ of the performance through documentation<sup>339</sup>. The zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ moves between life and death, performance and documentation, enabled via *live-streaming* that encourages a cycling of material, movement and media.

### *Recycle and Resubliminate*

This thesis has aimed to ‘return’ to view the development of technology at the National Theatre, used to project and enhance performance, demonstrating how the states of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ have realigned via live-streaming. The relationship between performance and documentation is cyclical, analogous with the continual back and forth of sublimation. The theoretical interweaving between the two states exposes the area between ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ that I have termed as the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’. I suggest that the theory can be applied to other productions developed at the National Theatre, and beyond, and will briefly consider the work of performance company Complicité and companies whose contributions to live-streaming may enhance the theories and contributions made within the thesis.

Complicité’s work began in the eighties and they have since worked in over forty countries<sup>340</sup>. Three productions are useful cases when considering the development of research and arguments identified within the thesis: A

*Disappearing Number* (2007), *The Encounter* (2015) and *Beware of Pity*

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<sup>339</sup> My concern within *Reborn* and *Revive* is less with the zone of ‘unmarked liveness’ and more on the notions of ‘aNTi Live’ and ‘paradocumentation’. I consider both of these as integral to my understanding of the ‘unmarked liveness’ and crucial to its sense of ontology as a moving entity.

<sup>340</sup> *Complicité*, 2017, (accessed: 20/08/17).

(2015)<sup>341</sup>. These three productions are united in their being live-streamed as both national and international performances. *A Disappearing Number* began with a series of developmental presentations, resulting in changes from the rehearsal process and initial performances ahead of the live-streaming<sup>342</sup>. The production was the first NT Live performance shown discretely; in 2010 the production was screened from the Theatre Royal Plymouth<sup>343</sup>. Although *The Encounter* too began its run in previews, the live-streamed version of the production occurred in 2016, shown live from the Barbican Centre and available for a week online after its premier<sup>344</sup>. Likewise, the Barbican Theatre housed *Beware of Pity* in 2017, and from here live-streamed the production to discrete viewers<sup>345</sup>. The live stream was available in the week following the production, as well as during a following week a few months after the Barbican screening. These productions are significant because their writing, development and presentation mirrors the format identified by the NT Live process in sharing work that has expanded beyond a collection of documents. *A Disappearing Number* parallels the lives of two mathematicians, working from archives to discover more about numbers and their patterns. *The Encounter* layers various elements of documentation from Simon McBurney's own pursuits into the jungle forming research on behalf of his company, to recollections of McBurney's daughter replayed during the performance. A book that had led McBurney to consider the idea of pollution and sustainability inspired the basis for the journey into the rainforest. *Beware of Pity* was co-created with Schaubühne Berlin, and played as part of the 14-18

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<sup>341</sup> The dates of the live-streaming altered from the dates of initial presentation. For the sake of academic rigour I am citing the 'original' performances, although my interests here lie with the streamed productions as expressed.

<sup>342</sup> *Complicité*, 2007, (accessed: 20/08/17).

<sup>343</sup> National Theatre, 2017, (accessed: 20/08/17).

<sup>344</sup> *Complicité*, 2015, (accessed: 20/08/17).

<sup>345</sup> *Complicité*, 2015, (accessed: 20/08/17).

NOW project that included the *Forbidden Zone*, directed by Mitchell. The production was concerned with a book that detailed a set of events, contributing if not causing the outbreak of the First World War<sup>346</sup>. The streaming of the three productions creates another layer of performance, and documentation, adding to the already layered process of production. I have not considered the productions further for the thesis at this time because of the limits I established for my research: I chose to focus my research on work established at the National Theatre. Whilst Mitchell had worked elsewhere, her media developments began at the National Theatre. Equally NT Live, whilst developed from other streaming projects, began with a National Theatre production. Although my expansion of cases during the last two chapters provided an opportunity to trace the development of my theory, associations with the National Theatre were cited; Mitchell's return to the National Theatre venue coinciding with the run of the *Forbidden Zone* at the Barbican, perhaps the new home of her media work in the United Kingdom has been emphasized. Likewise, the increasing popularity of Cumberbatch, arguably developed from his work in the National Theatre's *Frankenstein*, continued with *Hamlet*, a Barbican production nevertheless streamed by NT Live. I secondly chose to focus on the decade between 2006-2016, which I felt encompassed the progression of live-streaming and the influence of the National Theatre in this development. Whilst *A Disappearing Number* fell within this bracket, *The Encounter* and *Beware of Pity* were streamed in 2016 and 2017 respectively. Any comparisons between the productions would have involved research at a time when the performances were contemporaneous, meaning that writing this material into the thesis would be all

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<sup>346</sup> Barbican, 2017, (accessed: 20/08/17).

the more troubling. For this reason, the works were omitted, but I consider Complicité a group to be ripe for exploration, and this useful set of productions would demonstrate further the results of ‘performance’ and ‘documentation’ altering under live-streaming.

Complicité’s *The Encounter* used technology beyond the live-streaming of performance. The production’s set included a binaural head, that resonated within the ears of the audience who were required to wear headphones throughout, including live stream audience members viewing the performance discretely. As McBurney moved around the head, so the sound travelled into the ears of the audience members, as if the actor circled their heads, moving in and around the space. I consider that this use of technology creates another layering of performance, creating effectively a sense of touch in accompaniment to the sights and sounds created onstage. The use and manipulation of the senses moves the performance into the world of virtual reality: used increasingly within social spheres, the National Theatre’s *wonder.land* (2016) exhibited virtual theatre, progressed further by the production *Ugly Lies the Bone* (2017). Within performances where a sense of reality is virtual, an understanding of the ‘real’ or the ‘live’ is questionable. Although not the concern of this thesis, I highlight the more recent developments in the use of technology within theatre, specifically the Barbican and National Theatre, in order to progress and continue the debates fronted. The use of virtual reality within venues such as the National Theatre documents the development and elements of technology used within the beacon institution, presenting the question: where is the ‘live’ if theatre and performance has moved into the realms of the virtual? I propose that further technological developments such as virtual reality beg further distinctions and create further

theoretical questions in part considered in this thesis. Although I have been concerned with identifying the unmarked space of liveness between performance and documentation, my hope is that that zone between is now marked, and ready for further markings.

## **APPENDICES**

The research for this project was submitted for ethics consideration under the reference DTP 13/014 in the Department of Drama, Theatre and Performance and was approved under the procedures of the University of Roehampton's Ethics Committee on 24/07/13.



**ETHICS COMMITTEE  
PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM  
for institutions**

**Research Project: Performance/Documentation: Disrupting Ontologies**

Performance/Documentation: Disrupting Ontologies (2010-2017) takes place in the context of a proliferation of contemporary art practices that challenge the nature of performance and its relationship with documentation. It examines the recent tendencies towards multimedia work – work that includes media such as video or live streamed performances. Considering videoed and streamed work in relation to documentation, are these performances more documentary in nature, recording and effectively archiving performance? What might these shifts in viewing practice mean for the function of ‘ephemeral’, in-the-moment art, such as performance, which is centred around the notion of disappearance? The project works to combine the participants, practitioners and institutions affected by streamed and multimedia performances. Recorded interviews with practitioners and institutions will form a vital resource for the research work and potential publication of the material collated. With permission, I will spend less than two hours observing rehearsals and/or recordings of events.

**Investigator Contact Details:**

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**Consent Statement:**

- I have received assurances that the appropriate insurance is in place for my participation in this project.
- I understand that my participation in this project is voluntary and that I can ask any question regarding the project and have the right to receive understandable answers before making a decision to participate in this project.
- I give my consent to participation through recorded interview in the research project ‘Performance/Documentation: Disrupting Ontologies’.
- I consent to the author’s use of any selective quotation from this interview in the author’s writing around this project.
- I understand that no quotation will be used without further consultation with me (via my email or phone contact) on its precise wording and that any quotation in any published material will be fully credited to me. I understand the risks of having my thoughts and opinions represented in this context.

- I understand that I may request and secure anonymity in relation to any published quotation.
- I understand that I may withdraw freely from my participation in this project at any time and/or withdraw my consent to be quoted in its associated publications at any time by emailing the Investigator.
- I understand that the product of the research will be publications authored by the Investigator and may be sold by publishers commercially.
- I understand the research benefits of this project for the broad arts community.

Name .....

Date .....

Signature (on behalf of your institution) .....

Please note: if you have a concern about any aspect of your participation or any other queries please raise this with the investigator. However, if you would like to contact an independent party please contact the Head of Department (or you can also contact the Director of Studies.)

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## AUDIENCE SURVEY - HAMLET - NT LIVE

*This survey should take no longer than five minutes to complete.*

**How did you hear about this performance?**

**What are your primary reasons for coming to this performance today?**

**Before you came to this performance, have you done any of the following?**

(Please tick all that apply)

Seen advertising for the performance (e.g. a cinema poster or trailer)?	
Watched a trailer for the performance on the NT Live website?	
Watched or read 'extras' such as actor interviews on the NT Live website?	
Read a review for the performance from an 'official' source, e.g. a national newspaper?	
Read a review for the performance from a theatre audience member (e.g. on a blog?)	
Read any comments about the performance on social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)?	
Posted a tweet or status update about coming to see tonight's show?	
Used a National Theatre app on your phone or tablet?	

**During the performance, did you do any of the following? (Answers are completely anonymous)**

Take a photograph or video of the screen?	
Take a photograph or video of yourself or your friends?	
Tweet or update a status?	
Use the internet to find out more about the performance, actors, etc.?	

**Now you have seen this performance, do you intend to do any of the following?**

Keep a programme as a souvenir?	
Tweet or write a (short) status specifically about this performance?	
Write a review of the performance or write a (long) comment?	
Produce creative work (drawing, animated gif, fan fiction, etc.) inspired by tonight's performance?	
Share photos or video of yourself, taken this evening?	
Share photos or video you took during the performance?	
Use the internet to find out more about the performance, actors, etc.?	
Consider buying official NT Live merchandise?	

Thank you for your participation.

*This survey forms part of a small research project being conducted at the **University of Roehampton & Glasgow School of Art**. The research takes place Sept - Nov 2015. The aim is to find out more about how audiences view live broadcast events and their documentation. Data gathered for this survey will only be used for this project and directly related academic publications. Data is anonymous. Participants do not have to answer all the questions and can stop the survey at any time. This research project complies with the Glasgow School of Art policy on Research Ethics.*

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